

# **A Theoretical Model for the Preparation of an Inclusive and Bias-Free Expression Dictionary**

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## **DECLARATION**

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## Abstract:

The key to truly effective interpersonal relations is inclusive and bias-free expression, as language, culture, and society are inextricably intertwined. Expressions such as freedom, equality, ethics, justice, fairness, and objectivity have a prominent place within all cultural and societal contexts. Exclusive or biased expression may significantly impair how freedom is protected, equality upheld, ethics adhered to, justice meted, fairness preserved, and objectivity maintained. This can lead to individuals and groups of people being abused, bullied, dehumanised, oppressed, stereotyped, and othered. This unjust treatment might be based on gender, race, ethnic group, place of origin, sexual orientation, belief system, age, physical specific needs, and/or economic condition, among many others.

This dissertation addresses three relevant, timely, and impactful lexicographical questions:

- Are general English language dictionaries biased?
- If so, how?
- What kind of dictionary can be written to improve upon this situation?

Despite there being widespread biased and exclusive expression in the English language, general dictionaries do not do an adequate job of alerting users to this usage. Users accessing these lexicons are usually only getting a part of the full picture, information that ignores these aspects, or even descriptions which promote further biased and exclusive usage. Therefore, these lexicons are biased.

The dissertation begins by utilising a sociolinguistic framework to identify, describe, and illustrate biased and exclusive usage in the English language, focusing on some of the origins and current manifestations of the oppression and othering of two groups: females, and Hispanic Peoples.

Next, eight example expressions help to scrutinise the performance of twelve habitually utilised general English language dictionaries, from the bias and exclusion perspectives. As a whole, these lexicons do not provide insight into how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language. Their biased treatment is contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would handle these expressions, including some not yet incorporated into the general lexicons.

This is followed by a comprehensive analysis of the users who will benefit from this specialised dictionary, and how to best fit their needs. These range from learners of the English language, all the way through scholars performing next-level research. The role this lexicon plays within a dictionary culture is also explored.

Then, there is a thorough description of the typology, structures, functions, and content, along with lexicographers as real people, followed by a commentary on the benefits of electronic resources, suggestions for derivative works, and a recap of the contemplative and transformative characteristics of this dictionary.

A problem in the current lexicographic practice is a lack of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries. To date, metalexicography has not assisted practical lexicographers in a sufficient way to plan and compile them. Factors including the interplay of exclusionary connotations of expressions, and the nuances and gradations of biased expression are beyond the scope of regular lexicons. This dissertation remedies this by providing a theoretical model for the preparation of a dictionary focused on biased and exclusive expression, so that users will have a trusted lexicographical reference covering these crucial aspects of language and communication.

## Opsomming:

Die sleutel tot werklik effektiewe interpersoonlike verhoudings is inklusiewe en vooroordeelvrye uitdrukking, aangesien taal, kultuur en die samelewing onlosmaaklik verweef is. Uitdrukkinge soos vryheid, gelykheid, etiek, geregtigheid, billikheid en objektiwiteit het 'n prominente plek in alle kulturele en sosiale kontekste. Eksklusiewe of partydige uitdrukking kan dit aansienlik benadeel hoe vryheid beskerm word, gelykheid gehandhaaf word, etiek en geregtigheid nagekom word, billikheid behou word en objektiwiteit gehandhaaf word. Dit kan daartoe lei dat individue en groepe mense mishandel, geboelie, gedehumaniseer, onderdruk, gestereotipeer en uitgesluit word. Hierdie onregverdige behandeling kan gebaseer wees op geslag, ras, etniese groep, plek van herkoms, seksuele oriëntasie, geloofstelsel, ouderdom, fisieke spesifieke behoeftes en/of ekonomiese toestand, onder andere.

Hierdie proefskrif behandel drie relevante en impakvolle leksikografiese vrae:

- Is algemene woordeboeke in Engels bevooroordeel?
- Indien wel, hoe?
- Watter soort woordeboek kan saamgestel word om hierdie situasie te verbeter?

Alhoewel daar wydverspreide vooroordeel en eksklusiewe uitdrukking in die Engelse taal is, doen algemene woordeboeke nie voldoende werk om gebruikers hierteen te waarsku nie. Gebruikers wat toegang tot hierdie leksikons kry, kry gewoonlik net 'n deel van die geheelbeeld, inligting wat hierdie aspekte ignoreer, of selfs beskrywings wat verdere bevooroordeelde en eksklusiewe gebruik bevorder. Daarom is hierdie leksikons bevooroordeel.

Die proefskrif begin met die gebruik van 'n sosiolinguistiese raamwerk om die bevooroordeelde en eksklusiewe gebruik in Engels te identifiseer, te beskryf en te illustreer, met die fokus op sommige aspekte van die oorsprong en huidige manifestasies van die verdrukking en die uitsluiting van twee groepe: vrouens en sommige mense van Spaanse herkoms.

Vervolgens help agt voorbeelduitdrukkinge uit twaalf algemeen gebruikte algemene Engelse taalwoordeboeke om vooroordeel en uitsluiting te illustreer. In die geheel bied hierdie

leksikons geen insig in hoe ongelykheid, uitsluiting en viktimisering deur taal werk nie. Hul partydige behandeling word gekontrasteer met hoe 'n inklusiewe en vooroordeelvrye uitdrukkingswoordeboek hierdie uitdrukkings sou hanteer, waaronder sommige wat nog nie in die algemene leksikon opgeneem is nie.

Dit word gevolg deur 'n uitgebreide analise van die gebruikers wat voordeel trek uit hierdie gespesialiseerde woordeboek, en hoe om die beste in hul behoeftes te voorsien. Dit wissel van leerders van Engels, tot wetenskaplikes wat gevorderde navorsing doen. Die rol wat hierdie leksikon in 'n woordeboekkultuur speel, word ook ondersoek.

Daarna is daar 'n deeglike beskrywing van die tipologie, strukture, funksies en inhoud asook van leksikograwe as regte mense, gevolg deur 'n kommentaar op die voordele van elektroniese bronne, voorstelle vir afgeleide werke en 'n oorsig van die kontemplatiewe en transformatiewe eienskappe van hierdie woordeboek.

'n Probleem in die huidige leksikografiese praktyk is 'n gebrek aan inklusiewe en vooroordeelvrye uitdrukkingswoordeboeke. Metaleksikografie het tot dusver praktiese leksikograwe nie voldoende gehelp om dit te beplan en saam te stel nie. Faktore, waaronder die wisselwerking tussen die uitsluitingskonnotasies van uitdrukkings, en die nuanses en graderings van partydige uitdrukking, is buite die bestek van gewone leksikons. Hierdie proefskrif herstel dit deur 'n teoretiese model te verskaf vir die voorbereiding van 'n woordeboek gefokus op bevooroordeelde en uitsluitende uitdrukkings, sodat gebruikers 'n betroubare leksikografiese bron sal hê wat hierdie belangrike aspekte van taal en kommunikasie dek.

## Dedication:

This dissertation is dedicated to the two of the most sensitive, brilliant, analytical, eloquent, and courageous thinkers ever, whose writings are a lot less influential than they should be, on account of their having been females: **Karin Boye** and **Valerie Solanas**.

**Karin Boye** (1900-1941; writer and egalitarian), author of [\*Kallocain\* \(1940\)](#).<sup>1</sup> This chef-d'œuvre takes place in a world under the patriarchal, capitalist, and jingoistic jackboot of military subjugation, governmental propaganda, and indentured servitude. She explores the resulting society and culture, characterised by oppression, dehumanisation, injustice, disease, squalor, overpopulation, a lack of privacy, and for the most part a life of terror, distrust, and the inability to communicate effectively with other people.

Representative quote: ([Boye, 1940:28](#))

*“Above all, it’s the ability to shed your own point of view and accept the right one.”*<sup>2</sup>

**Valerie Solanas** (1936-1988; writer and egalitarian), author of the [\*SCUM Manifesto\* \(1968\)](#).<sup>3</sup> In this sociocultural coup d'état, she candidly describes how *patriarchy* is responsible for ruining the world. She specifically enumerates a great deal of what’s wrong in our society, and with no shortage of acerbic humour shares her keen insight into the male psyche, along with some radical suggestions for improvement.

Representative quote: ([Solanas, 1968:17](#))

*“Although he wants to be an individual, the male is scared of anything in himself that is the slightest bit different from other men; it causes him to suspect that he’s not really a ‘Man’.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Full text of *Kallocain*, prefaced by a biography: [https://archive.org/stream/KALLOCAIN/KALLOCAIN\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/KALLOCAIN/KALLOCAIN_djvu.txt)

<sup>2</sup> In *Kallocain*, the “right” point of view is whatever it is arbitrarily determined to be at any given moment by the propaganda ministry of the “Worldstate.”

<sup>3</sup> Full text of the *SCUM Manifesto*:  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20190819180215/https://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/shivers/rants/scum.html>

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As a mentor, Professor Gouws has probably seen it all. Many times. The same promise, the same promises, and the same mistakes. As his mentee, I have very gratefully enjoyed the incomparable privilege of benefitting from one of the true luminaries in both theoretical and practical lexicography. During his many decades of dedication, his lexicographical and overall academic enthusiasm and brilliance continue unabated. Simply put, lexicography, on all levels, would not be what it is without him.

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## Chapter One – Dissertation introduction:

On a social and cultural level, we are currently mired in a “*political correctness*” fad. This entails being “obligated” to *not* say or do this or that, or to *have to* say or do that or the other in order to “not get in trouble.” None of this alters any of the deep-rooted intolerance and hate a person may have. Language shapes how people think, behave, see, and experience life, and therefore how they treat each other. Nobody is born knowing what expressions like *nigger*, *bitch*, and *spic* mean, nor with a predisposition to use them with such hate and violence. These are things that must be learned within a given society and language<sup>4</sup>.

*Patriarchy, masculine hegemony, the gender binary, heteronormativity, heterosexism, sexism, speciesism, racism, xenophobia, colonialism, classism, and ethnocentrism*, among many others, continue to be an integral part of our culture, and so long as there is biased and exclusive language, these, and all mechanisms of dividing and victimising will continue to thrive.

Real inclusion is found in *authentic regard*, where there is genuine respect, tolerance, and consideration. Linguistic othering and oppression can only be eradicated from the **inside**. The same way people learn to discriminate, denigrate, and other through language, they can learn to accept, affirm, and cherish through it as well. Expressions that are biased and exclusive must be identified, described, and illustrated, which is something that the regular dictionaries are not doing. This means that they are ignoring or mischaracterising such usage, and therefore legitimising it.

An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, on the other hand, would give users unbiased and inclusive paraphrases of meaning and explanations that help enhance understanding and awareness, which itself fosters not speaking or writing in a biased and exclusive manner. Not using this othering and oppressive language promotes not thinking in such terms, which in turn translates into not acting this way. As more and more people express themselves in an unbiased and inclusive manner, others are encouraged to do so as well.

This dissertation addresses three relevant, timely, and impactful lexicographical questions:

- Are general English language dictionaries biased?
- If so, how?
- What kind of dictionary can be written to improve upon this situation?

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<sup>4</sup> Please note: readers should be aware that my writing style is a little less formal than seen in many academic publications.

The dissertation begins by demonstrating how harmful oppressing and othering expressions can be, goes on to evidence how the regular general English dictionaries are biased, and then provides a theoretical model for the preparation of an inclusive usage and bias-free dictionary.

### 1.1: The dissertation in a nutshell.

- **Chapter Two** provides insight into how oppressing and othering expressions come about, including exemplifications of the damage they do.
- **Chapter Three** shows how twelve regularly utilised general English dictionaries are not doing a proper job where bias and exclusion are concerned. Their treatment of expressions is contrasted with how an inclusive usage and bias-free dictionary identifies, explains, and illustrates bias and exclusion in the language.
- **Chapter Four** itemises who would be utilising inclusive usage and bias-free dictionaries, and how to best serve their needs.
- **Chapter Five** covers the typology, structures, functions, content, lexicographers, electronic resources, derivative works, and contemplative/transformational characteristics.

### 1.2: A more detailed description of what each chapter has to offer:

#### 1.2.1: Chapter Two.

In this chapter, the vilification and subordination of females, other groups, and non-human animals are exposed for what they truly are: *patriarchal drivel*. This is accomplished through the use of a *sociolinguistic* and *sociocultural* framework, based on the insight that the analytical methods of *critical discourse analysis*, *critical reality awareness*, and *intersectionality* provide. Two key segments of the population are used as examples: females, the largest oppressed group, and Hispanic Peoples. Myriad manners in which the language evinces bias and exclusion are identified, described, and illustrated, based on some of the origins and current manifestations of the subjugation and oppression of these two groups.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first goes into detail on the othering, gendering, and abuse of non-human animals, and how these are mapped over to the oppression of human females, along with the concomitant violence, exploitation, vilification, and subjugation. It is then shown how females are linguistically and symbolically closely associated with animals, the

latter having been deemed as “inferior,” which helps to “validate” the abuse of both. *Sexism* and *speciesism* are connected, as are all manifestations of *oppression*. Key links between patriarchy and scientific research that purportedly evidences “female inferiority to males” are also explored, including their downplaying of the importance of gestation and mothering in general. There is also an examination of a variety of expressions that disparagingly correlate humans (with the negative connotations reserved mostly for *females*) with domesticated animals, along with the corresponding sociolinguistic consequences. This chapter part will conclude with a look at how the representation of women in the mass media, and spectacles such as beauty pageants, dehumanise and objectify all females. The ultimate denigration, abuse, torture, and humiliation of females is expressed through rape, sexual slavery, prostitution, and pornography, all of which are patriarchal weapons devoted to keeping all females down.

The second part explores in detail the othering of Hispanic Peoples from the cultural and sociolinguistic perspectives, as expressed through biased and exclusive usage in the English language. Historical background and vivid examples help place everything in its proper perspective. It is shown how a key component of the marginalisation and oppression of Hispanic Peoples is their so often being portrayed through clichés that are equal parts hackneyed and disparaging, especially as seen through the mass media. Factors including racialised governmental language policies, unfair treatment in the legal and educational systems, and the use of discourse that exacerbates xenophobic tendencies that foster exclusion and violence against Hispanic Peoples are also explored. It is also shown how “just a few well chosen words” can encapsulate a world of hate and oppression against whole groups of Peoples, in this case Hispanics. The *othering* of Hispanic Peoples is representative of the ways that all *out-groups* are othered.

### 1.2.2: Chapter Three.

In this chapter, eight example expressions are employed to scrutinise the performance of twelve habitually utilised general English language dictionaries, from the bias and exclusion perspectives. This chapter makes use of the same sociolinguistic analytical framework seen in Chapter Two, in order to carefully examine the role language plays in the fostering, preservation, and furtherance of power, privilege, oppression, and othering.

These example expressions include instances of the three types of lemmas an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature, which are:

- 1) *Expressions that are biased and exclusive*, followed by bias-free and inclusive alternatives, plus explanations which provide insight into the biased and/or exclusive nature of the lemma. In this chapter these are ***boys will be boys***, ***spinster***, ***senior moment***, and ***drama queen***.
- 2) *Expressions that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion*, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. In this chapter these are ***rape culture***, ***victim blaming***, and ***policing of masculinity***.
- 3) *Expressions that are bias-free and inclusive*, which serve to double-check on bias-free and inclusive usage. These include ***gender affirmation***, which wraps up this chapter.

The paraphrases of meaning the general English dictionaries provide are also contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with these expressions.

Amongst the eight examples there are also expressions that are not yet present in some or even any of these regular dictionaries, and their absence is a part of helping keep many social problems invisible. Besides this, having only a sprinkling of slightly more specialised expressions focusing on inclusion/exclusion does not help in acquiring an appreciation of the bigger picture of oppression and othering. As a whole, it will be shown that the regular dictionaries do not give their users insight into how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language.

An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, on the other hand, would provide users with the needed biased and exclusive expressions, with each getting the treatment they deserve. The paraphrases of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary, combined with the added insight that the examples and illustrations provide, would help users to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the real-life use and attendant consequences of so many expressions.

### 1.2.3: Chapter Four.

This chapter starts with a look at the *function theory* of lexicography, which can be summarised in this manner: dictionaries should properly address the specific information

needs of specific users under specific extra-lexicographical circumstances, and be quick and easy to use.

Then, fundamental aspects regarding the *search process* in relation to the *user experience* are explored, as applicable to an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary. After this, situations leading to consulting these lexicons are identified, each emphasising their cultural and social relevance, on the basis of specific *extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative* user informational needs. There is also a segment on lexicographers as real people, and how in order to genuinely address user needs, they need to not just to be *identified*, but to also be *understood*. Purely lexicographical situations were presented as well, along with continued illustrations of the place such dictionaries would have within, and to encourage, a *dictionary culture*.

The main section of the chapter is dedicated to the various *user groups* an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would serve, such as:

- Learners in academic settings, including:
  - Learners of English as a first language.
  - Learners of English as an additional language.
  - High school (or secondary school) students.
  - University (or college) students.
  - Graduate (or post-graduate) students. In this segment, a doctoral programme completely devoted to race, inequality, and language in education is highlighted.
- Scholarly researchers, the most advanced user group, was looked into in detail, including the possibility of their enjoying purely lexicographical experiences.
- Writers of all persuasions, along with language and media practitioners.
- Professionals of all kinds.
- Learners and users of English as an additional language as adults, or outside of academic settings.
- Individuals from all walks of life, such as those who wish to express themselves in a manner that further reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others.

### 1.2.4: Chapter Five.

This chapter begins with *typology*, where it will be shown that this would be a *monolingual synchronic English restricted LGP dictionary that is openly, totally, and strongly proscriptive*.

Then, the *structures* will be covered in detail, proceeding from the general to the specific, including:

- the frame structure
- the outside structures
- the outer access structure and macrostructure
- the mediostructure
- the inner access structure, article structure, and microstructure
- the search zones.

Of the seven *search zones*, three would be in most articles, a fourth in many, and the rest would appear only as needed. A detailed example of the search zones “in action” will be given for each lemma type, specifically:

- ***spinster***, an *expression that is biased and exclusive*
- ***policing of masculinity***, a *concept related to bias and exclusion*
- ***gender affirmation***, an *expression that is bias-free and inclusive*

It will be shown that a properly organised *article structure* fits all user needs, no matter what their specific information desire may be at any given moment.

The coverage of *functions* that starts in Chapter Four will be completed in Chapter Five.

Then, the *content* will be considered from three perspectives, these being:

- How lexicographers as real people affect the selection of lemmas and their treatment.  
The vital role that an awareness of how power, privilege, subjugation, and exclusion work, in order to help fight othering and oppression on the individual, institutional, and cultural levels, will again be emphasised.
- How its usefulness is enhanced by a suitable article structure.
- How to optimise both quality and quantity.

After this, many of the particularly beneficial ways in which the presentation of content via *electronic mediums* will be enumerated, including searching for anything in any manner, full cross-referencing, the ability to create individual user profiles, mouse functions such as hovering over expressions for paraphrases of meaning, results pages with access to learning resources, and the real-time synchronisation of everything.

Then, *derivative works* will be briefly explored, with examples, for thesauri and bilingual versions. Finally, a summary of the *contemplative and transformative characteristics* of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries will be given, including listings specific to *electronic lexicons*.

### 1.3: Additional notes.

Here are a few words on lexicographical terminology to be utilised throughout this dissertation. Please note that:

- ***article*** will be used instead ***entry***
- ***expression*** will be used instead of ***term***, ***word***, or ***phrase***. That is, an ***expression*** may be a single word, or a group of words functioning as a single unit.
- ***lemma*** will be used instead of ***headword***
- ***paraphrase of meaning*** instead of ***definition***

In a personal communication<sup>5</sup>, the supervisor of this dissertation, Rufus H. Gouws, elegantly and eloquently distinguishes *paraphrase of meaning* and *definition*:

*“Although the term “definition” is still frequently used in lexicography, Wiegand suggested the use of the term “paraphrase of meaning” to refer to the item giving the meaning of a given treatment unit in a dictionary. The term “definition” does not provide for the specific needs of the specific users of a specific dictionary.*

*“Paraphrase of meaning” indicates that the lexicographer does not cover all aspects of the meaning but only paraphrases those aspects that are relevant in the specific dictionary. A specific lexical item will have different paraphrases of meaning in different dictionaries. This also applies to the way in which the expressions you are investigating will be treated in different dictionaries.”*

---

<sup>5</sup> Permission to use this text was obtained, of course!



*Definition* is a rather prescriptive word in itself, irrespective of whether it refers to the contents of a *prescriptive*, *descriptive*, or *proscriptive* dictionary. It has a certain *absolute* quality to it, that seems to preclude any alternative interpretations. Although lexicographers should naturally strive to be as precise as possible, language evolves, with the meaning of an expression at any given moment being ultimately determined by its cumulative use. Unless they are writing a *prescriptive* dictionary, the best lexicographers can do is to access as many sources as possible, and “average out” what should be copious notes on the current usage of each expression. *Paraphrase of meaning* much better conveys this “collective mass” than *definition* does, so this is another reason the former will be utilised throughout this dissertation.

In addition to the examples to be explored in Chapter Three, several other expressions will also be given paraphrases of meaning. Most will be prepared by me, and the rest will be cited from the literature, lexicons, or the like. These paraphrases of meaning will be provided for expressions that are of a sufficiently specialised nature that it could not be reasonably anticipated that even intelligent and well-read people will necessarily know precisely what they mean.

## Chapter Two - A brief sociolinguistic view of English as a language of oppression, with a focus on *females* and *Hispanic Peoples*, based on some of the origins and current manifestations of the subjugation and victimisation of these two groups:

### 2.1: Introduction.

In Chapter Three it will be shown how twelve regularly utilised general English dictionaries are not doing a proper job where bias and exclusion are concerned, mostly on account of their not identifying, describing, nor illustrating their presence in the language. By keeping their users mostly in the dark, they are fostering, preserving, and furthering many of the deleterious manifestations of the established order. Chapter Two will evidence how harmful biased and exclusive usage can be, and in doing so sets up the exacting analyses in Chapter Three.

Those that other and oppress classify people into two mutually-exclusive groups, conveniently placing themselves in the superior/dominant position, at the expense of those they “decree” to be inferior/subordinate. This ostensibly helps them to “justify” the victimisation of those they “establish” to be lesser.

As will be demonstrated in this dissertation, language is indispensable in the formation and maintenance of these socially constructed “hierarchies,” within which the subjugators and exploiters make it clear which groups are glorified or vilified, through divisive labels that enable the binary structures of “us” against “them.” Toxic manifestations of these include:

- males superior to females (*sexism*)
- “civilised” superior to “primitive” (*colonialism*)
- “whites” superior to “anything else” (*racism*)
- humans superior to non-human animals (*speciesism*)

The same fear, hate, and contempt apply to *heterosexism*, *xenophobia*, *classism*, *ethnocentrism*, *chauvinism*, *religious intolerance*, *lookism* (physically “attractive” superior to “unattractive,”) and so on. The oppressors concoct and spread the use of abhorrent linguistic labels such as *bitch*, *cunt*, *spic* and *greaser*, which facilitate the societal and cultural determination of who get to enjoy unwarranted privileges at the expense of the *others*, who are the targets of unjustifiable hate, violence, and subjugation. So, in order to set the stage for the next chapter, the current chapter offers insight into how oppressing and othering expressions come about in the first place, along with providing some real-life consequences of biased and exclusive expression.

The first part of the chapter begins with how *patriarchy* originated in pastoral societies, with the first instance of *othering* being the devaluation of non-human animals from being fascinating and awe-inspiring, to becoming inferiors who exist for nothing more than human exploitation. Then, the *gendering* and abuse of non-human animals and their links to the oppression of human *females* will be explored, from a sociolinguistic perspective. It will be shown how females are linguistically and symbolically closely associated with animals, the latter having been deemed as “inferior,” which helps to “validate” the vilification and abuse of both. After this, the analytical framework used throughout this dissertation, based on *critical discourse analysis*, *intersectionality*, and *critical reality awareness* will be explained. Through these, the supposed “justifications” for the subordination of females, other groups, and non-human animals are exposed for what they truly are: *patriarchal drivel*.

Throughout this chapter, the destructiveness of myriad “*us over them*” messages are revealed, as manifested in this first part by non-human animal-based exploitation, exhibitions, and sadism, with correlations to human females from the linguistic, cultural, and social viewpoints.

Then, key links between patriarchy and scientific research that purportedly evidences “female inferiority to males” are also delved into, including how these investigators downplay the importance of gestation and mothering in general. From the psychological perspective, compelling evidence will be given to hypothesise that maybe it was really the envy males had (and still have) of females being able to gestate, give birth, breastfeed, and have a close emotional attachment with their offspring that prompted the fabrication of the so called *penis envy*.

There will also be an examination of a variety of expressions that disparagingly correlate humans (with the negative connotations reserved mostly for *females*) with domesticated animals. This chapter part will conclude with a look at how the representation of women in the mass media, and spectacles such as beauty pageants, dehumanise and objectify all females. The ultimate denigration, abuse, torture, and humiliation of females is expressed through rape, sexual slavery, prostitution, and pornography, all of which are patriarchal weapons devoted to keeping all females down.

This chapter part will demonstrate that the manner in which females are subjugated and exploited is representative of how subjugation and exploitation work in general. That is, *sexism* and *speciesism* are connected, as are *all* manifestations of oppression.

The second part of the chapter will explore in detail the *othering* of Hispanic Peoples from the cultural and sociolinguistic perspectives, as expressed through biased and exclusive usage in the English language. Historical background and vivid examples will help place everything in their proper perspective. It will be shown how a key component of the marginalisation and oppression of Hispanic Peoples is their so often being portrayed through clichés that are equal parts hackneyed and disparaging, especially as seen through the mass media.

First, there will be some historical background on the contemptible ethnic slur *greaser*, including its brutally colonialist, xenophobic, and racist origins, along with some of the cultural, institutional, and individual consequences of the use of such a hate-filled expression.

Next, the racial epithet *spic* is explored, whose prevalent use “on the streets,” in schools, homes, and workplaces has continued unabated since first “coined” over a century ago, including frequent appearances in books, television, and movies. A couple of real-life examples of the hate, violence, and murder accompanying the use of this expression are detailed, along with sociolinguistic commentary on power and oppression.

This part of the chapter closes with the *bandito* stereotype, one of many *Hispanic/Latin@* oversimplified and formulaic representations that have been exploited on film, television, print and electronic media, “history” books, internet commentary, and so on. Several examples from their vilifying, denigrating, trivialising, and otherwise othering portrayal in films are illustrated.

Factors, including racialised governmental language policies, unfair treatment in the legal and educational systems, and the use of discourse that exacerbates xenophobic tendencies that foster exclusion and violence against Hispanic Peoples will also be surveyed. The thorough exploration of the slurs *greaser* and *spic*, along with the *bandito* stereotype, will demonstrate how biased and exclusive expression does nothing but harm.

As a whole, this chapter part will show how “just a few well chosen words” can encapsulate a world of fear, hate, vilification, and oppression against whole groups of Peoples, in this case Hispanics. The *othering* of Hispanic Peoples is representative of the ways that all *out-groups* are othered.

## 2.2: Chapter Two, Part One: Females.

### 2.2.1: The origins of *othering*: non-human animals are devalued from fascinating and awe-inspiring to inferiors who exist for nothing more than being exploited by humans, thanks to *patriarchy*.

[Mason \(2017\)](#) tells of how tens of thousands of years ago our evolutionary ancestors lived in harmony with nature; animals, plants, and the environment in general. Back then, as our brains were rapidly developing, non-human animals were a source of endless fascination, as evidenced by the first human art (created over 30,000 years ago) in which animals figure prominently.

Then, the domestication of non-human animals started, and it has all been downhill for them ever since. The pastoral societies (with shepherds and livestock) had a power and wealth *male-centred* hierarchical organization which was obsessed with the exclusive ownership of non-human animals, and this led to aggressive hostility towards *others*, flamboyant animal sacrifices, wars and raiding, and a pronounced social inequality which included slavery ([Mason, 2017](#)). “Might made right,”<sup>6</sup> and “horse-mounted, herd-driving warriors” eventually led to the first empires [Mason \(2017:138\)](#).

As will be seen a bit further in this chapter, the subjugation of non-human animals was then extended to human females as well, thus *patriarchy* originated in these pastoral societies.

**patriarchy** *n* An ideology and societal structure in which males have most or all of the power, at the expense of females and the environment. Females are subjugated from the liberty, moral, cultural, social, educational, sexual, reproductive, legal, religious, leisure, labour, political, economic, and ownership perspectives. In a patriarchal society females and animals are objectified and commodified, with the concomitant lack of regard for their needs and well-being. The institutionalised system of male dominance over females is embodied in *patriarchy*.<sup>7</sup>

[Mason \(2017\)](#) goes on to point out that the ruthless exploitation of animals, in which their lives were controlled from birth through death for the profit and convenience of humans, was

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<sup>6</sup> Whoever has the strength/power controls/oppresses/decides what is just, etc. This too, is a part of the *established order*.

<sup>7</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all *paraphrases of meaning* provided in this dissertation are mine.

in diametrical opposition to the former view of non-human animals as reverence-inspiring and captivating. This created bothersome inconsistencies, such as how to “justify” the oppressing and killing of what were supposed to be spiritual beings, just like *us*. The “solution” that the oppressors and subjugators conjured up had multiple facets, with the objective being of placing *us* humans unambiguously above *them* the non-human animals [Mason \(2017\)](#).

Religion played a key role: the divine status of non-human animals was replaced with an anthropomorphic god<sup>8</sup> ([Mason, 2017](#)). Non-human animals have been consigned to be an inferior *other* as a justification for violence against them ([Deckha, 2010](#)).

The placement of any given “*us*” over any given “*them*,” such as males over females, whites over blacks, English over other languages, one religion over others, or human animals over non-human animals, is the essence of *othering*:

**othering** *n* The classification of people as superior or inferior, based on dogmatically categorising them as a part of an *in-group* or *out-group*. The discriminators consider themselves to belong to the superior-dominant-similar *in-group*, while the *others* are relegated to the inferior-subordinate-different *out-group*. For example, a religiously intolerant person may view people who have different (or no) religious beliefs as being immoral, savage, unenlightened, or otherwise *inferior*. This *othering* may have deleterious consequences, such as exclusion and violence, and serves to “justify” their intolerance and oppression of *others*, since to them *they* are “lesser” beings. Those victimised by *othering* are *others*. *Othering* may also be applied to the relationship humans as a whole have to non-human animals.

By now, pretty much anyone who isn’t a white US American, British, or northern European male (especially if wealthy, Christian, and heterosexual) is *othered*. Since the ruthless exploitation and slaughtering of non-human animals are highlighted in this section as emblematic of the oppression and subjugation of females, perhaps “meat-eating” can be added to the non-othered list of requirements.

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<sup>8</sup> Even such a god’s “nemesis”, “a devil,” comes equipped complete with a tail and horns, neither of which are a part of the human anatomy. Therefore, “he” must be an animal or a beast.

Another critical part of the demotion of non-human animals was the conversion of enchantment and appreciation into contempt and disparagement. Society and language helped in this regard, through the vilification of animals, and the association of unwanted human traits or activities with non-human animals. There is a selection of *epithets* that correlate humans with traits unimaginatively (and mostly incorrectly) “assigned” to domesticated animals a little further in this section, in [Table 2:2](#).

### 2.2.2: What’s on the plate?

As far as meat-eating goes, by calling what had been living flesh names like *pork* or *veal* makes it all sound pretty harmless, although animals that are further removed from humans (and thus “even less important”) such as chickens or ducks don’t even “earn” a euphemism. ([Mason, 2017](#)).

According to [Mitchell \(2011\)](#), every year well over 50 billion non-human land animals are gruesomely slaughtered worldwide for food, after enduring a miserable existence. The adjective *wretched* is woefully inadequate to characterise the violence, pain, torture and lack of freedom that these animals are forced to suffer before finally being butchered. To this, the killing of perhaps an additional 15+ billion aquatic non-human animals for food can be added ([Finelli and Mason, 2006](#)). Those who consume meat and other non-human animal products need not do anything violent themselves, since the animal farming industry does it for them ([Mitchell, 2011](#)). The violence perpetrated is nonetheless not diminished by what could be called unawareness in the best of cases.

### 2.2.3: Gendering non-human animals, and links to *human females*.

[Calvo \(2008:32\)](#) shared a brief but revealing conversation she had with a farmer’s assistant at a big farming show in the UK. First, she frames the upcoming dialogue. (***My comments, which represent a possible interpretation of sections of this text from the sociolinguistic and intersectional perspectives, are between parentheses in bold and italic***):

- “My visit to the Royal Smithfield Show, one of the largest events in the British farming calendar, reminded me of the gendering of agricultural animals.”<sup>9</sup> (***Without gendering,***

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<sup>9</sup> ***Agricultural animals*** are land animals, especially chickens, cows, and pigs, that are bred, live horribly, and then finally killed for their meat or because they “serve no further purpose.” Unless, of course, they die before then from injuries, disease, and/or abuse.

*patriarchy cannot function. How could the males dominate and exploit the females if they can't be sure of "who" is "what?"*)

- "Upon encountering one particular stand in which there were three pale honey coloured cows (with little room for themselves), some straw, a bucket of water, and Paul, a farmer's assistant" (*This sets up the ensuing dialogue, equipped with all the needed information: "blonde" cows in cramped quarters and the basic food and drink, and a human to give info and answer questions about the female members of the Bos genus<sup>10</sup> being showcased*).
- "Two cows were lying down whilst the one in the middle stood and shuffled" (*Prepares us for that other cow among cows*).
- "Each cow sported a chain around her neck with her name on it" (*Tells us the extent of the identity that these sentient beings are allowed to have: the names a human gave them. The "sporting" might simultaneously ridicule the way human animals assign non-human animals names to give them an identity, the way the humans gave "her" a decorative (and therefore superficial) "fashion" touch through the chain, and even make it sound like the cows are "cool" and "chilling."<sup>11</sup>*)
- "The one in the middle was named 'Erica.' " (*For the most part, it is she who will be conversed about between the author Erika and Paul the farmer's assistant, so we get introduced to her*).
- The "Most farmers prefer Blondes," (*is likely meant to be a humorous reference to the "women of their species" (cows), corresponding to how many men like "blonde" women*).
- "A reference to the name given to this particular breed, the Blonde D'Aquitaine" (*such a name makes them sound "so exotic"*).<sup>12</sup>

And now, the conversation that took place between Erika and Paul, in the presence of the three cows and under the "*Most farmers prefer Blondes*" banner, (*with my comments between parentheses in bold and italic*):

- **Erika:** "What's special about this breed? Why should farmers prefer them?" (*These are reasonable questions, considering the claim that "Most farmers prefer Blondes."*)

<sup>10</sup> *Bos* is a genus of cattle that includes cows and bulls.

<sup>11</sup> *Chillin* or *chillin'* or *chilling*: to just be hanging out, that is, to not be doing much of anything. Not bored, not excited; just taking it slow and easy. They make it seem that the cows didn't really have much else to do at the time, and that they were fine with being at the show.

<sup>12</sup> So these cows are "*exotic blondes*;" how could they miss?



- **Paul:** “Oh, they’re easy to handle, docile really, they don’t get the hump<sup>13</sup> and decide to do their own thing. They also look nice, quite a nice shape, well proportioned. The colour’s attractive too.” (*That sounds like what a sexist, objectifying, immature, and racist male would want in a human female: requiring little or no effort to be controlled, being passive, unable to think for themselves, possessing good looks, having pleasant curves, and even having a “proper” colour*).
- **E:** “What do you have to do while you’re here?” (*Another rational question; we know what the non-human animals are supposed to be doing there, so why not ascertain what the human is doing*).
- **P:** “Make sure they look alright really<sup>14</sup>. Clear up after ‘em, wash ‘n brush ‘em. Make sure that one (he pokes<sup>15</sup> “Erica”) don’t kick anyone<sup>16</sup>.” (*Pretty understandable, except for his gratuitous poking of Erica. This “reaffirms” his “superiority” for Erica, Erika, himself, and anyone else who may be observing to see*).
- **E:** “I thought you said they were docile.” (*She follows up nicely*).
- **P:** “They are normally. She’s abnormal that one- really bad tempered.” (*His use of “abnormal” is othering*).
- **E:** “Perhaps she doesn’t like the crowds and the lights?” (*Again, a sensible question; that would have to be a stressful situation for a sentient being that would prefer to peacefully chew its cud in a quiet meadow*).
- **P:** “She certainly didn’t like the lift yesterday.” (*He further shows his disregard for Erica’s well-being through this remark*).
- **E:** “I don’t suppose she’s had much experience in lifts.” (*Erika makes a comment that takes into account the perspectives of both Erica and Paul*).
- **P:** “Nah, it’s not that. She’s just a bitch, that one.” (*And here is where we get to the point of why this illustrative quote was included: Paul summed up his view on females, be they “mere animals” or human, with a single word: bitch. To him, all females across all species are apparently the same: if they require little or no effort to be controlled, are passive, are unable to think for themselves, possess good looks, have pleasant curves, and are the proper colour, they are fine. Any deviation from this, especially from the perspective of their behaviour, means that “she’s just a bitch.”*)

<sup>13</sup> To *get the hump* in this context means to get angry or “pissy” (cranky).

<sup>14</sup> *Intensive animal farming* has its “ugly side,” but “appearances” must be kept, including at big farming shows.

<sup>15</sup> He could have just pointed at her, but, he had to poke her, to reaffirm his superiority *and* her subordinate place.

<sup>16</sup> So, if anything were to happen, it would be *Erica’s* fault.

And that is how language and reality are: just a single word can make a world of difference. A single word can put every other word expressed in a given context in its proper perspective. A single word can do all this and more, and that is especially true when the single word is a vilifying and denigrating epithet such as *bitch*.

#### 2.2.4: A bit on *intensive animal farming*<sup>17</sup>, with further sociolinguistic notes.

[Calvo \(2008\)](#) further notes that all slaughterhouse animals, irrespective of sex, are prodded on with *gendered* epithets, such as *cunt* and *bitch*. She goes on to say that human dominance is a male thing, where a callous disregard for the life and suffering of animals is a requirement, and that these days even enjoys a certain “macho appeal” among young men. Calvo further develops the machismo theme by describing these “caricatures of *masculinity*,”<sup>18</sup> who usually:

- are poor men and have a muscular physique
- wear sport vests or sleeveless shirts, preferably with an exposed chest
- carry around knives or scabbards
- are on the job covered head to toe with blood (and apparently proud of it)
- reaffirm how macho they are through their butchering and segmenting of animals

[Calvo \(2008\)](#) also mentions sexualised practices in slaughterhouses, and just plain sex with animals. A part of the killing process often involves thrusting a large “boning” knife into the chest cavity of the animal, to speed up the death process. She points out that the term *boning* is rife with *machismo*<sup>19</sup>.

In a rather vulgar and explicit conversation, a meat packer [Calvo \(2008:42\)](#) spoke with had this to say:

**Meat packer:** “*You can do it best with a sheep. You can pick them up by putting your hand up their rib cage, or up their arse, basically, ‘cause there’s a big hole where their tail’s bin cut off. There’s lots of it, all the time y’know - sex with sheep. You*

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<sup>17</sup> Please click on this text for a permalink providing a brief explanation of intensive [animal] farming, from the environmental perspective.

<sup>18</sup> Kind of like “watchdogs that police masculinity” and “set the standard by forced example.” In Chapter Three, the *policing of masculinity* example looks more deeply into this.

<sup>19</sup> Although *boning* might “jocularly” refer to using the “bone” (penis) for sexual penetration, the extremely violent origin of the expression connotes images of a savage perpetrator forcefully subjugating a powerless victim.

*might get a huge steak; they're chilled, not frozen, right? An' you might slap it about a bit...Well; slap it about someone's head. Especially if we got a bag of steak that's full of blood, could squirt it on them. It looked like the inside of someone, something, y'nah?"*

**Erika:** *"The inside of what?"*

**Meat packer:** *"Beef curtains (laughs)."*

How much more violent and objectified does it get, than sticking a hand up an anus for a "proper grip?" And, if that were not enough, the expression *beef curtains*<sup>20</sup> (while laughing, even) makes it even more clear: animals *and* women are objects that exist for abuse and sex<sup>21</sup>. Irrespective of the species, the victim is *gendered*, the oppression and violence is sexualised, and the victims ferociously conquered by the males. Any empathy is reserved for the perpetrators, as in "hey, he is just trying to make a living." [Beirne \(1997\)](#) enumerated some of the types of sexual assault humans perpetrate against non-human animals, including adolescent sexual experimentation, commodification, and aggravated cruelty.

### 2.2.5: The "rape rack."

Our enjoyment of milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and veal from the cows and calves perspectives: it all begins with the appropriately named "rape rack,"<sup>22</sup> where dairy farmers shove a hand way up into the cow's vagina, for artificial insemination ([Kemmerer, 2013](#)). This is "necessary," since cows, like all mammals, only lactate when pregnant ([Daintith and Martin, 2010](#)). As soon as the cow gives birth, the calf is taken away, despite the mother's despairing efforts. Her calf, if male is shuttled off to eventually becoming veal<sup>23</sup> and the cow is mechanically milked until she needs to be *rack-raped* anew. And so on, until her "production" falls off; then she gets slaughtered.

<sup>20</sup> *Beef curtains* is an extremely vulgar expression to refer to the *labia majora*, although anyone using the expression *beef curtains* would likely say they are referring to "big pussy lips" (the latter only slightly less vulgar).

<sup>21</sup> [Maher, Pierpoint, and Beirne, \(2017\)](#) put forward that there are studies revealing that up to 35% of adult populations have perpetrated acts of sexual assault against non-human animals.

<sup>22</sup> A "rape rack" is utilised to restrain the cow, while an arm (not "just" a hand) is shoved up the rectum to "position" the uterus, to then have the impregnating instrument perform its task. Humanemyth.org permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20181011135715/http://www.humanemyth.org/happycows.htm>

<sup>23</sup> As mentioned, using a term like *veal* sounds harmless in comparison to *calf*. Males don't produce milk, so they are used for veal. <https://web.archive.org/web/20181011135715/http://www.humanemyth.org/happycows.htm>

Here we see how not just the cow's vagina is "property for exploitation;" so are her udders. And the rest of her body, for that matter. Cows can live past twenty years naturally, while those exploited in dairy farms barely last five or six. By then, they are in such bad shape that many can't even stand, so they need to be shoved off the truck at the slaughterhouse. Until their deaths, they made dairy products such as cheese and milk possible, along with veal, and later what's left of them is ground into hamburgers ([Kemmerer, 2013](#)). A single fast-food beef-based hamburger, such as those found in *McDonalds* or *Burger King*, may contain the meat from dozens or even hundreds of cattle ([Schlosser, 2012](#)).<sup>24</sup>

### 2.2.6: Language, power, the *social construct of gender*, and how all oppression and abuse are related.

[Stibbe \(2001\)](#) states that animals have been mostly excluded from discussions of the relationship between language and power on account of their having not participated in the social construction of them through language<sup>25</sup>. He goes on to mention that although a relatively small number of people (such as those in *intensive animal farming*) exert a direct coercive power over animals, that the oppression and exploitation of non-human animals is maintained by most people who uphold this imbalance of power through the consumption of animal products.

[Dunayer \(1995\)](#) shares several fundamental observations that correlate the abuse, exploitation, and revilement of *non-human animals* with the maltreatment, exploitation, and vilification of *women*. Among them:

- Humans gave themselves the "right" to subjugate animals because they arbitrarily categorised the latter as "inferior".
- This self-appointed superiority "justifies" the abuse, exploitation, and killing of animals for the benefit of humans.
- Humans have created words and mental images which demonise and denigrate animals, further facilitating their oppression and exploitation.
- This has helped create an insurmountable schism between human animals and non-human animals, with humans on top.

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<sup>24</sup> One might try thinking of how many diseased "shoved-offers" are contained in each bite of these meat-based sandwiches. Bon appétit!

<sup>25</sup> In Chapter Three it will be highlighted how important it is to perpetrators to silence their victims, as a part of their continued violence and oppression against them. Non-human animals have no [human] voice of their own, of course, making them easy targets for their continued abuse. There are some human allies who try to help.

- Women have been intimately associated with “inferior” animals linguistically and symbolically, while men have been attached to aggrandised words and images expounding the “superior” human species.
- The oppression of women is thus facilitated and exacerbated by their association with these “less than human” beings.

*Othering* is an indispensable part of the *established order*. There are several sociolinguistic approaches available to scrutinise how language, power, privilege, gender, race, and other cultural and social structures and constructs are exploited to keep certain groups on top at the expense of the others, and to pit “us” against “them.” The most commonly utilised is *critical discourse analysis*.

### 2.2.7: Using an *analytical framework combining critical discourse analysis, intersectionality, and critical reality awareness*.

In this chapter, the subordination of females, other groups, and non-human animals are exposed for what they truly are, as revealed by an analytical framework based on *critical discourse analysis*<sup>26</sup>, *intersectionality*, and *critical reality awareness*. In Chapter Three, the same analytical foundation is employed to meticulously examine the role language plays in the fostering, preservation, and furtherance of power, privilege, oppression, and othering, and to demonstrate how twelve regularly utilised general English dictionaries are not doing a proper job where bias and exclusion are concerned.

Here is a paraphrase of meaning for *critical discourse analysis*<sup>27</sup>, from [Van Dijk \(2015a:466\)](#):

“**Critical Discourse Analysis** (CDA) is discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such *dissident research*, critical discourse analysts take an explicit position, and thus want

<sup>26</sup> Please note that this dissertation is *not* using *critical discourse analysis* as a theoretical basis, but *is* using concepts, aspects, and approaches from this field.

<sup>27</sup> [Van Dijk \(2015a:466\)](#) also notes that he prefers to use the term *critical discourse studies* (CDS), as opposed to *critical discourse analysis* (CDA), on account of the term CDA implying more of a “method,” as opposed to CDS’s “perspective” which draws on myriad methods.

to understand, expose, and ultimately challenge social inequality. This is also why CDA may be characterized as a *social movement* of politically committed discourse analysts.” (All emphasised words appear so in the original cited text).

[Van Dijk \(2015a:466\)](#) goes on to state the following:

“As an *analytical practice*, CDA is not one direction of research among many others in the study of discourse. Rather, it is a critical *perspective* that may be found in all areas of discourse studies, such as discourse grammar, Conversation Analysis, discourse pragmatics, rhetoric, stylistics, narrative analysis, argumentation analysis, multimodal discourse analysis and social semiotics, sociolinguistics, and ethnography of communication or the psychology of discourse-processing, among others. In other words, CDA is discourse study *with an attitude*.” (All emphasised words appear so in the original cited text).

Here is a paraphrase of meaning for *critical discourse analysis* as it might appear in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary:

**critical discourse analysis (CDA):** The incisive examination of the role language plays in the fostering, preservation, and furtherance of the established order, especially through othering. It involves the dissection of linguistic expression in any form and of any length, with the objective of baring the otherwise concealed messages that help to oppress, exploit, and victimise groups of people, such as women, non-whites, “foreigners,” “minorities,” those that are economically poor, lack a formal education, and so on. Its goal is to promote a more egalitarian society by identifying, exposing, and illustrating how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language. Such investigation takes into account the social context of the discourse, including who says or writes what and where and how, and who is watching, listening, and/or reading and under what circumstances. Other factors considered include images or objects which accompany texts or spoken words, silence (or what is not stated) that can help misrepresent what is communicated, and may even extend to facial gestures, body language, and the like. CDA is necessarily biased, but in a good way: it is biased against bias, but also acknowledges when discourse resists the abuse of power.

*Intersectionality* adds a powerful lens through which multiple forms of oppression can be better seen, such as how sexism, racism, and heterosexism intersect with each other to exacerbate the deleterious effects each would have individually. [Atewologun \(2018\)](#) provides an excellent overview of *intersectionality*. Here is the first paragraph:

*"Intersectionality is a critical framework that provides us with the mindset and language for examining interconnections and interdependencies between social categories and systems. Intersectionality is relevant for researchers and for practitioners because it enhances analytical sophistication and offers theoretical explanations of the ways in which heterogeneous members of specific groups (such as women) might experience the workplace differently depending on their ethnicity, sexual orientation, and/or class and other social locations. Sensitivity to such differences enhances insight into issues of social justice and inequality in organizations and other institutions, thus maximizing the chance of social change."*  
[\(Please click on this text for a permalink of the full article\).](#)

A synergistic amalgam of sociolinguistic and sociocultural tools, especially *critical discourse analysis*, along with *intersectionality*, might be called ***critical reality awareness***. *Critical reality awareness* can be employed to dissect pretty much any set of linguistic, social, cultural, and behavioural variables as a part of the deep exploration into how the established order oppresses and others, and into the suffering of the victims. Through *critical reality awareness*, the quotidian realities of those that are subjugated and tormented are better understood, as is also the perspective of *non-oppressing* members of “dominant” groups who are willing to struggle for a more egalitarian society.

Within a *critical reality awareness* framework, for instance, it is clear to see how countless Indigenous Peoples (*Native Americans* and *First Nations*, among others, in the USA and Canada) might have painful additional secretions of gastric acid paired with agonising thoughts when hearing “good Americans” cheerfully wishing each other a “*happy Thanksgiving*.” To them, and to informed and fair-minded people, the national glorification paired with a silence about the genocidal conquest is a bit much. When the continuing oppression of Indigenous Peoples is factored in, it is way too much. That such an “innocuous and well-meaning” expression can evoke such images and physiological reactions is a fitting



example of how language, society, culture, thinking, and even physiology are inextricably intertwined.

One of the articles that helps provide a better understanding into what “Thanksgiving day” truly represents, is an essay by [Jensen \(2012\)](#), titled “*No Thanks for Thanksgiving*.” It is prefaced by the following text:

*“Instead, we should atone for the genocide that was incited -- and condoned -- by the very men we idolize as our 'heroic' founding fathers.”* ([Please click on this text to read further on the realities of “Thanksgiving” then and now, how conquering white supremacists “forget,” and how they keep their victims invisible](#)).

While on the topic of “Thanksgiving day,” [Birke \(2012\)](#) argues that *intersectionality* must also address how power structures should not apply to only humans, but to all non-human species as well. [Siskind \(1992\)](#) elaborates on the tradition-based excesses of this day, and on the consumption of a “sacred meal” whose centrepiece is a stuffed turkey.

As mentioned, the enhanced analytical framework that *critical reality awareness* provides is utilised to complement that of *critical discourse analysis* and *intersectionality* in this and the next chapter.

### **2.2.8: Animals are not just for eating and doing work: “*better patriarchy through science*.”**

Any number of human activities can also make life miserable for non-human animals; the oppression, exploitation, and killing is not just for food. Another key one is *scientific experimentation* “for the *greater good*<sup>28</sup>.” There are many examples of barbaric animal cruelty, ranging from mice to monkeys, and such research has been taking place for over two millennia. [Hajar \(2011\)](#) notes that animals have been used throughout the history of biomedical research, dating back to Aristotle’s time, close to 2,400 years ago.

[Gross \(1998\)](#) described how Galen, around 1,900 years ago in Rome, conducted animal experiments on pigs and other non-human animals, among some of the better-known early

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<sup>28</sup> The “*greater good*” as defined by the oppressors, that is; we as humans decide what is “good for *them*.”



cases. According to [Gross \(1998\)](#), on a strapped-down squealing pig, Galen accidentally cut laryngeal nerves and “discovered” where they were and how they worked, since the pigs kept struggling but could no longer squeal. With this knowledge, he later silenced birds, monkeys, bears, goats, lions, dogs, etc.

[McDonald \(1986\)](#) mentions that one of the excuses that contributed to the painful experimentation on non-human animals for “scientific knowledge” was the *Cartesian*<sup>29</sup> perspective that animals are nothing more than machines. Cited examples included tests of the sex life of cats as a function of their mutilation, and how monkeys turned wheels when subjected to radiation. Such “experimentation” seems to do little more than further demonstrate the *speciesist*<sup>30</sup> relationship human animals have with non-human animals.

More recently, in the 2010s, experimentation on rhesus macaques with electrode probes implanted in their brains at the Max Planck institute in Germany has been exposed as extremely cruel, with surreptitiously taken pictures as a part of the evidence.<sup>31, 32</sup>

### **2.2.9: Patriarchy, “love,” and the downplaying and trivialisation of the roles females play, especially in mothering.**

Just a few decades ago, Harry Harlow conducted animal research, in what he referred to as “Love in infant monkeys” ([Harlow, 1959](#)).

In a nutshell, Harlow was purportedly investigating love and attachment in rhesus monkeys, to correlate the results with humans. His most famous experiments had infant monkeys stripped from their mothers a few hours after birth, to be “reared” by two surrogates. One was a very crude wire and wood “mother” that had a nipple to feed on, and the other was an

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<sup>29</sup> *Cartesian*: “Relating to the philosophy, methods or coordinates of (Des)cartes, who proposed the notion of a mind-body dualism (‘ghost in the machine’) which has haunted medical thought ever since, but which is now beginning to be rejected by many of those with enough interest to consider the matter.” (Rene Descartes, 1596–1650, French mathematician and philosopher) Cartesian. (n.d).” *Collins Dictionary of Medicine*. (2004, 2005). ([Please click on this text for a permalink](#)).

<sup>30</sup> *speciesism* - The oppression, exploitation, othering, and commodification of non-human animals based on the belief that humans are superior to all other species. Examples include the consuming of, experimenting on, and killing of animals.

<sup>31</sup> [Please click on this text to access a permalink for more on an “investigation \[that\] uncovers the horror of life for monkeys in a top European animal experiments laboratory.”](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Please click on this text to access a permalink to see a picture that will likely be disturbing to sensitive people.](#) The photograph is of one of these macaque monkeys with a brain implant. There are many more such photographs on the internet, considerably more disturbing than even this one.

equally crude “wire and wood mother” that had a terry cloth cushioning the wood and metal frame<sup>33</sup>. The monkeys, instinctively seeking to survive, were forced to feed from the “wire mother,” but spent most of their time clinging to the “cloth mother,” especially during “fear tests,” and the like. One such test had a “*mechanical teddy bear which moved forward, beating a drum*” ([Harlow, 1959:70](#)) which was placed in the small cage with the monkey.

Harlow also tested other concepts, such as how the infant monkeys would react to being “shaken off” or catapulted away by their “mother,” or a “mother” with spikes that would project out of its body, and so on ([Suomi, Van der Horst, and Van der Veer, 2008](#)).

Another “pet” project involved a device which he called the “pit of despair,”<sup>34</sup> where he would individually isolate infant monkeys for weeks at a time ([Blum, 2010](#)). In any case, where *patriarchy* is concerned, there is no concern, regard, or even a second thought for the victims, be they non-human animals or otherwise.

Here is how Harlow’s experiments might be interpreted to reflect a *patriarchal*<sup>35</sup> perspective, using the aforementioned analytical framework:

- *exploitation* - sentient, sensitive, and intelligent beings were stripped from their mother shortly after birth, for “investigation and experimentation.” The mothers were obviously also horrendously victimised by these tests.
- *oppression* - the “best part” of the lives of these monkeys was to simply be left alone in their very small cages with their “mothers.” When Harlow actively experimented, the misery and torment was drastically escalated. He apparently did not investigate the deleterious effects of living in constant *fear*; he was purportedly focused on “love.” During the previous year, however, [Brady \(1958\)](#) published the results of his own sustained-stress “executive monkeys” experiments.<sup>36</sup>
- *othering* - since monkeys are “just lowly and insignificant animals,” it is “perfectly justified” to experiment on them, especially if it “helps humans.” If rhesus monkeys can be used for this, then they can be used for other “experimentation.” And, if they can be used in general for such purposes, then so can other animals.
- *commodification* - who knows how long these monkeys lived, being subjected to such torture. It is doubtful that he tallied how many baby monkeys died from shock and grief

<sup>33</sup> The “cloth mother” had perhaps what was meant to be a “loving face.”

<sup>34</sup> What was Harlow supposed to be “investigating” with his “pit of despair?” Self awareness?

<sup>35</sup> On account of *patriarchy* being based on exploitation, oppression, othering, and commodification.

<sup>36</sup> To read a permalinked concise summary of the [Brady \(1958\)](#) experiments, [please click on this text](#). To see a picture of a pair of these “executive monkeys at the office,” [please click on this permalink](#).

shortly after being born. There is no mention of the unfathomable pain their actual mothers felt.

Among the several aspects of Harlow's "love" experiments, was his absolute disregard for the mother concept, other than as a source of food or comfort. A macaque mother, like a human mother, should represent that and much more, including protecting and *loving*, after gestation and birthing. As mentioned, the infant monkeys were taken from their mothers shortly after birth, to then have a "wire mother" and a "cloth mother," neither of which (obviously) could provide love.

Since his research was supposed to tell us about us humans through the monkeys, and the only members of the human species that can give birth are all female, in a way Harlow might have also been reducing all human females who are parents to the equivalent of "wire mothers" and "cloth mothers." Furthermore, he stripped away the love, hugs, companionship, protection, teaching, gestation, birthing, and on and on, from the complement that encompasses the human female in relation to reproduction. [Goldschmidt \(2011\)](#) mentions that Harlow's test subjects became psychopathic, highlighting test females that would later not copulate and would anyway not care for its infant if artificially inseminated. There is more on the trivialisation and downplaying of gestation and mothering in the *penis envy* section, coming up.

#### **2.2.10: Another note on rape.**

Fittingly, Harlow called his artificial insemination device a "rape rack" ([Linzey and Linzey, 2017](#)). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, each new cycle of cow abuse begins with its own "rape rack," where dairy farmers shove a hand way up into the vagina, for artificial insemination ([Kemmerer, 2013](#)). [Troost \(2008\)](#) draws attention to the manner in which a *rape culture* is a prime example of how most forms of oppression are related, in that they control and/or claim ownership of the bodies of those they subjugate. In a *patriarchal* society, rape extends not only to non-human females, but to human females as well.

The expression *rape culture* refers to the sexual violence and rape within a *patriarchal* and *capitalistic* society where "violence is sexy," brutality against females is normalised, and the victims are blamed. There will be much more on this in the next chapter, where *rape culture* is one of the example expressions. Rape is rape, and all this raping is linked, and with each subsequent rape, raping is further reinforced, across all species.

### 2.2.11: *Penis envy* as a psychological component of *patriarchy*.

Since this section deals with the oppression, exploitation, othering, and violence against females, it will now be shown how the tormenting of monkeys by Harlow may have been intimately related to *patriarchy* and its inherent fear, envy, and hatred of females. Around a century ago, Freud<sup>37</sup> introduced the concept of *penis envy*<sup>38</sup> to “scientifically explain” the “superiority” of men over women, alongside the “inferiority” women supposedly felt in relation to men. [Chiland \(2005\)](#) provides an explanation of *penis envy*<sup>39</sup>, in which it is strikingly evident that Freud was a *patriarch* in a *patriarchal culture*, and did his best to make males out to be superior to females, in good measure on account of his having a firm *phallogentric* perspective.

### 2.2.12: Is it *penis envy* on the part of females, or is it really envy on the part of males of something much more meaningful: the giving and maintaining of life?

What if the true *envy* really was that which many males had (and still have) of women being able to gestate, give birth, breastfeed, and have a close emotional attachment with their offspring? What if this envy resulted in males having feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, and the inability to do the most fundamental things for the continuation of the species? And, what if, in a *sour grapes*<sup>40</sup> kind of rationale, it was *this* envy that was behind *penis envy*?<sup>41</sup>

**Table 2:1**, on the next page, sheds light on this:

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<sup>37</sup> “The father of psychoanalysis” ([Pope, 2012:42.](#))

<sup>38</sup> *penis envy* (S. Freud) A psychoanalytic theory that girls envy boys because they have penises. According to Sigmund Freud, between the ages of three and six, when girls discover they lack this organ, they feel “handicapped and ill-treated,” blame their mothers for the loss, and want their penis back. Criticized by many, including Margaret Mead and Karen Horney. Also known as *phallus envy*.” (From: [Corsini, R.J., 2002. The dictionary of psychology](#). Brunner-Routledge, p.704).

<sup>39</sup> *Penis envy* *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. . Retrieved September 20, 2018 from Encyclopedia.com. [Please click on this text for a permalink to this article.](#)

<sup>40</sup> “*Sour grapes*”: “If I can’t have it, then it must be useless and worthless, so therefore I don’t want it.” The idiom “*sour grapes*” is from the fable apocryphally ascribed to Aesop. [Please click on this text for a permalink to a “short but sweet” version of “The fox and the grapes”.](#)

<sup>41</sup> [Bain \(1936\)](#) notes insightfully that if Freud had been, for instance, a Trobriand woman, her (his) “envy” theory might have been about the envy males have of the vagina and breasts.

<b>Table 2:1 - Anatomical and physiological aspects related to pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum; females and males:</b>			
<b>Anatomical and physiological aspect related to pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum:</b>	<b>Is a male able to do this, from the anatomical and physiological perspectives?</b>	<b>Is a female able to do this, from the anatomical and physiological perspectives?</b>	<b>Further comments, and who may have envy of what is seen and heard and perhaps felt?</b>
<b>Gestate</b>	<b>No</b> , since men have no uterus, they can not develop a foetus inside their body.	<b>Yes</b> , as almost all women have a uterus. <sup>42</sup>	Gestation is a nine-month <sup>43</sup> reminder of who can be a mother. This entails a nine-month round-the-clock dedication to the life of another.
<b>Give birth</b>	<b>No</b> , since they can neither gestate nor have a way of delivering a baby.	<b>Yes</b> , since most women can gestate and deliver a baby.	Giving birth is a very impactful event for the mother, baby, and father. The female's tremendous sacrifice is keenly seen here.
<b>Nurse with own breasts</b>	<b>No</b> , since the male chest does not develop into milk-providing breasts. <sup>44</sup>	<b>Yes</b> , as the female breasts are able to lactate to feed the infant.	Another reminder, of varying length, that without the mother the baby would die.
<b>Feed with a baby bottle</b>	<b>Yes</b> .	<b>Yes</b> .	The nourishment can be there, but this is not the same as nursing.
<b>Produce milk</b>	<b>No</b> . <sup>45</sup>	<b>Yes</b> .	So, even after the nine-months or so reminder of who <i>gives life</i> , it is now evident who <i>maintains life</i> naturally.
<b>Provide a warm and hugging body</b>	<b>Yes</b> .	<b>Yes</b> .	This will depend on the parent's disposition.

After having enumerated many of the key aspects of *real* mothering, here is a look at how Harlow goes about his trivialisation and disparagement of mothers and motherhood, as seen through a brief passage from his article ([Harlow, 1959:70](#)) (*My comments, which represent a possible interpretation of sections of this text, are in bold and italic*):

<sup>42</sup> There are *ectopic pregnancies* (outside of the uterus), which if untreated would likely result in the death of the mother early in the pregnancy.

<sup>43</sup> The statistically average human gestation period is around 266 days (a bit under 9 months).

<sup>44</sup> There are pathological conditions which can lead to *galactorrhea*, in which milk is secreted from nipples. But when this occurs in men it is naturally not considered as nursing, nor "baby related" in any fashion.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

- “All our experience, in fact, indicates that our cloth-covered mother surrogate is an eminently satisfactory mother” **Possible message: real mothers are superfluous, since a cloth-covered mother surrogate performs the same function. If so, real mothering is trivialised and downplayed.**
- “She is available 24 hours a day to satisfy her infant’s overwhelming compulsion to seek bodily contact” **The “overwhelming compulsion to seek bodily contact” might be due to the infant having been stripped from its mother shortly after birth, living in sheer terror, having neither love or affection of any kind, nor even living companionship of any nature.**
- “She possesses infinite patience, never scolding her baby or biting it in anger” **Perhaps Harlow could have recognised that impatience, badgering, and corporal violence are (hopefully) not a part of mothering and baby rearing in general.**
- “In these respects we regard her as superior to a living monkey mother, though monkey fathers would probably not endorse this opinion.” **Might this be an unfunny, denigrating, objectifying, and misogynist comment “humorously” stating that male monkeys value female monkeys exclusively for the sex, similarly to the way a misogynist human might also so disparage and objectify females? In his “superior to a living monkey mother” quip, Harlow also makes it sound like he has given these test monkeys a better and more loving life, since the “cloth mother” he provided to them is superior. Again, since his experiments were supposed to map over to humans, Harlow was also “telling us” about human mothers and babies.**

Harlow was so “revered,” that any number of honours were bestowed upon him, including the presidency of the *American Psychological Association*.<sup>46</sup> Harlow’s investigations, conclusions, and work in general might be seen differently in the light of the items in **Table 2:1**, and the quotes analysis.

### 2.2.13: Further on Harlow and “women vs. men,” from the sociolinguistic perspective.

The word *mother* appears 126 times in this relatively short article (it has about 3,250 words), and *father* appears twice. *Cloth mother* appears 24 times, and *her* instead of *it* was the

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<sup>46</sup> Permalink:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180922065800/http://www.apa.org/about/governance/president/former-presidents.aspx>

chosen pronoun to refer to it on all occasions, further associating it with the female gender, which makes sense, since it was a “mother.” The inclusive *parent* appears only once. The two appearances of *father* are telling: one, as explained, refers to the *father* using the *mother* apparently for sexual gratification, and the other in his plans for expanded work of a similar nature: “*We expect to extend our researches by undertaking the study of the mother’s (and even the father’s!) love for the infant, using real monkey infants or infant surrogates.*” ([Harlow, 1959:74](#))

Harlow used the word *affection* when he might have more precisely chosen *comfort*. An inanimate *cloth mother* may provide *comfort* to monkeys living in terror who are instinctively drawn to a “furrer” body more akin to theirs, or anything at all that might be comforting. But concepts such as fondness, tenderness, kindness, and compassion, all associated with affection, can not be provided by a *cloth mother*. In using the words *affection* along with *mother*, Harlow makes it seem like a piece of cloth on an inanimate object does what “real” mothers do, and therefore misrepresents what it means to be a mother, and a woman in general, through trivialisation, downplaying, and objectification.

#### 2.2.14: Additional notes on animals “sacrificed” for science.

It naturally isn’t just rhesus macaque monkeys being exploited “in the name of science.”

[Badyal and Desai \(2014\)](#) share the following figures:

- Each year, at least 50 million, perhaps 100 million animals are used for experimentation.
- Test subjects include guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, frogs, and to a lesser extent cats, dogs, and non-human primates.
- Areas of investigation include cosmetics, pharmacology, behavioural studies, and education.
- To all these, perhaps a billion mice and rats, plus unknown amounts of birds and fish can be added.

#### 2.2.15: More non-human animal-based exploitation, spectacles, and sadism, and yet more “*us over them*” and similar messages.

All “*us over them*,” “*we are superior to them*,” “*they are there for our use, enjoyment, exploitation, etc.*,” messages may also serve to reinforce the *males over females* mindset, as all



oppression and abuse are connected. The following are some more socially-accepted, and therefore approved, “*us over them*” animal-based instances.

Beyond science there is the need to sadistically reaffirm the “man over beast” ideology, as seen in game and bird hunting. Then there is the exploitation, torture, and death of animals for entertainment and gambling purposes. Examples include cockfighting, bullfighting, dog-fighting, circuses, zoos, safari parks, horse and dog racing, and on and on. Circuses, to mention one of the more insidious yet pernicious members of this list, also serve the purpose of indoctrinating children on the “humans over animals” established order. Kids generally like and are attracted to animals. In circuses, “where kids are special,” children see various ways in which intelligent and sensitive non-human animals are trivialised (for instance, elephant tricks), dominated (for example in “the lion cage,”) and paraded for *gawking* at (all of them). They may not understand what is really going on, but certain messages are being wired in, including: “man is superior to beasts,” and that mindlessly *gawking at others* is a form of entertainment. Most children clap and cheer, and even scream for joy in circuses. All at the expense of tortured animals. Since animals are commodified in a *patriarchal* society, such exploitation for betting and amusement, in addition to experimentation and food, is no surprise. And, the sooner indoctrination begins, the more effective it is ([Brucker, 2015](#)).

The use of non-human animals who are trained to perform in circuses is a socially-acceptable way of mistreating *animals* within a consumer capitalist economy ([Schwalm, 2007](#)). In addition, *women* are objectified, and some circuses also have “freak sideshows” to further “amuse” the public. This is altogether a performance in cruelty, exploitation, and *othering*. Additional spectacles that trivialise and inflict pain upon animals are rodeos, “marine mammal parks,” and so on.

It is apparent that humans have an unquenchable thirst for ludicrous spectacles, and there are certainly enough human buffoons to provide cheap thrills to those who combine a lack of imagination, gross insensitivity, and sadism. All they need to do is switch on the “boob tube”<sup>47</sup>, where there is no shortage of programming that will fit their needs. Demand for

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<sup>47</sup> *boob tube* is slang for “television,” since boobs (dull people) often gape stupidly at it. That, or it turns people into dullards. Another connotation for “boob tube” is a tight-fitting “tube shaped” top that serves as the only cover for the wearer’s “boobs” (breasts). In this manner, a “boob tube” serves three “purposes:” a) it is a tube to highlight the *boobs* while more or less covering them, b) any nearby *boobs* (dullards) may gawk at these *boobs* so displayed, and c) the “fashionista” (a person who obsessively follows any and all fashion trends) gets to show who the boob *really* is (the one packing herself in a tube -not unlike a sausage- for public consumption). [Please click on this text for a permalink of a “love me for my brains” pose of a woman wearing a boob tube.](#)



shows featuring sadism, masochism, pain, and injuries are profitable television markets, as seen through reality TV shows such as “Balls of Steel” ([von Pahlen, 2011](#)), “Pranked,” ([Wiggins, 2014](#)), and “Jackass” ([Cohan, 2001](#)).

[Francione \(2010\)](#) unequivocally asserts that we as humans have no sane justification for our continued treatment of non-human animals as property. These are sentient beings that are abused, exploited, and killed for our use. He also mentions other spurious arguments people have come up with to abuse animals, such as the religious superstition that “legitimises” animal abuse on account of their purported spiritual inferiority since “*they do not have souls, are not created in God’s image, or are otherwise inferior spiritually*” ([Francione, 2010:35-36](#)). In addition, he notes other *us vs. them* correlations, such as if saying it’s acceptable to exploit and oppress animals “*because we are human and they are not*” is tantamount to stating “*we are white and they are black,*” “*we are men and they are women,*” or “*we are straight and they are gay*” ([Francione, 2010:35](#)). In any case, the legal “protection” that non-human animals have is usually limited to the property rights of their owners ([Wrenn, 2015](#)).

#### **2.2.16: Humans, mostly females, characterised pejoratively as animals, along with sociolinguistic manifestations.**

As seen throughout this chapter, there is no shortage of “animals are inferior to humans” messages. It is easier to dehumanise, denigrate, oppress, and exploit *human females* when they are compared to, associated with, referred to, and called “*animals*,” characterised as such, or spoken of through the use of words that are also utilised to make reference to non-human animals.

Please see **Table 2:2**, on the next page, for a variety of expressions that disparagingly correlate humans (with the negative connotations reserved mostly for *females*) with domesticated animals<sup>48</sup>, to help illustrate this:

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<sup>48</sup> Whether animals are or not that way was, and still is, irrelevant.

**Table 2:2 - A selection of expressions that correlate humans with traits unimaginatively (and mostly incorrectly) assigned to domesticated animals:**

Epithet:	Associated animal:	Usage in reference to females:	Cultural and social notes:	Usage in reference to males:	Cultural and social notes:
<b>bitch</b> <i>n</i>	<b>female dog</b>	1) a contemptible, wretched, and domineering female 2) something really hard and unpleasant 3) a very promiscuous female 4) a prostitute 5) a close female friend; used only between females	1) when used between females may have positive connotations; offensive when used by a male. 2) “just like a <b>bitch (n) (1)</b> can be” 3) vulgar and very offensive 4) offensive; Ex. “a pimp has his <i>bitches</i> .” 5) a partially “reclaimed” term.	1) a despicable and wretched male 2) an effeminate male 3) a male who submits to another male, sexually or otherwise	1) offensive; especially due to its association with females 2) meant to offend males who are not <i>macho</i> enough 3) offensive; “ <i>real men</i> do not submit to anyone.” Used especially for servile submission.
<b>bitch</b> <i>v</i>	<b>female dog</b>	to complain	vulgar and offensive; used especially when the complaining is associated with being a <b>bitch (n) (1)</b>	to complain	vulgar and especially offensive to men, since “ <i>real men</i> don’t <i>bitch</i> ”
<b>bull</b> <i>n</i>	<b>male of domestic cattle</b>	powerful, aggressive, large	much less often used to refer to females	powerful, aggressive, large	these are all seen as positive male traits in most societies
<b>cat</b> <i>n</i>	<b>cat</b>	a female	utilised more to refer to males	a male	often a “cool guy”
<b>catty</b> <i>adj</i>	<b>cat</b>	subtly malicious	“cats are subtle and sneaky; not unlike women”	subtly malicious	utilised more to refer to females
<b>chicken</b> <i>n</i>	<b>chicken</b>	coward	utilised more to refer to males	coward	“a <i>real man</i> can not be a coward”
<b>cock</b> <i>n</i>	<b>male chicken</b>	-	-	penis	vulgar term
<b>cow</b> <i>n</i>	<b>female of domestic cattle</b>	fat and stupid	always offensive	-	-

Epithet:	Associated animal:	Usage in reference to females:	Cultural and social notes:	Usage in reference to males:	Cultural and social notes:
<b>dog</b> <i>n</i>	<b>dog</b>	very ugly female	offensive; often refers to a female who is unappealing in every manner	1) a male 2) a despicable male 3) a male who is always sexually aroused and very promiscuous	1) neutral connotation 2) a rare negative connotation for males 3) most males consider that to be a good thing
<b>filly</b> <i>n</i>	<b>female horse</b>	young female	usually “frisky,” often attractive	-	-
<b>hen</b> <i>n</i>	<b>female chicken</b>	1) gossiping and/or meddling 2) female soon to be married	1) offensive; usually refers to older females 2) neutral connotation	-	-
<b>pussy</b> <i>n</i>	<b>cat</b>	1) female genitalia 2) female as a sexual object	1) very vulgar term 2) very vulgar and offensive term	cowardly male	<i>real men</i> are supposed to be fearless
<b>sow</b> <i>n</i>	<b>female pig</b>	obese, ugly, and mean	very offensive; usually refers to older females	-	-
<b>stallion</b> <i>n</i>	<b>male horse</b>	-	-	sexually active and great in bed	the “mythical” man that can “go all night long”

Note: *Macho* and *real man/men* refer to customarily seen masculine traits, such as aggressiveness, competitiveness, physical recklessness, a propensity for violence, constant sexual appetite, and misogyny.

Each expression individually is to varying extents insulting enough to *females*, but when presented together, as seen in this table, the complete insensitivity, contempt, and degradation are that much more apparent.

Such epithets are dehumanising, trivialising, and downplay the worth of *human females*. This helps “justify” their oppression and exploitation, as if they were *animals*, the latter having already been “proven” to be inferior to humans. There is no shortage of people who believe

that animals “were created<sup>49</sup>” to be used by humans for labour, entertainment, consumption of their flesh, or for anything else anyone could come up with, such as experimentation, torture, killing “for the sport of it,” use as a weapon to attack other people, and for sexual assault.

[Mason \(2017:139\)](#) coined the expression *misothery*, and presented its etymology in this manner:

“it comes from two Greek words, one meaning ‘hatred’ or ‘contempt,’ the other meaning ‘animal.’ Literally, then, the word means *hatred and contempt for animals*.” (Italics in original text).

This extends to a hatred and contempt for nature in general.

[Mason \(2018\)](#) had this to say about *dominionism*:

“We are destroying the planet because of the myths of human supremacy and *dominionism* — the belief in our God-given ownership of the world. Because of nearly universal belief in these myths, human beings — in unprecedented numbers — are exploiting the planet’s soil, air and water, and its plant and animal life as so much private property. The world is our oyster, we believe, so we pluck it, break it open, rob its pearls and devour its tissues, thereby killing it. Because of these myths, we put human life above all other life and we license ourselves to use or destroy it to further our own lives.”

### 2.2.17: “Sex sells.”

[Wright \(2017\)](#) puts forth that beauty pageants and pornography set attractiveness, appearance, and behaviour standards that must be adhered to by females in order to obtain and keep the approval of males within a *heteropatriarchal society*. The gaze of these males of any age has its harmful consequences, including boys learning about sex and sexuality with an oppressive perspective, and older males seeking sexual activity involving more pain and coercion (including rape). She goes on to summarise how females appear on television, in movies, magazines, marketing, and so on:

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<sup>49</sup> The religious superstition that “legitimises” animal abuse on account of their purported spiritual inferiority since they “are not created in God’s own image” was mentioned earlier in this section.

*“The media continues to produce the message that women’s bodies are for the consumption and touch of men, while also upholding the misogynistic view that women are for men only.”* [Wright \(2017:21\)](#)

“That sultry look that sells” is not limited to human females. For example, the images for dairy products advertisements and containers usually have idyllic settings and smiling and perhaps even “sexy<sup>50</sup>” cows, so that consumers can more happily consume. Among other things, such marketing helps children correlate the exploitation and oppression of animals with that of women. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the earlier indoctrination begins, the more effective it is.

### **2.2.18: Rape, sexual slavery, prostitution, and pornography.**

Although there are also male prostitutes, most are female<sup>51</sup>. Same goes for victims of sexual trafficking. The hackneyed expression that prostitution is “*the oldest profession*” is more aptly characterised by [Bindel \(2018\)](#) as “the oldest *oppression*”<sup>52</sup> (emphasis mine). She notes that by calling it a job, and even decriminalising prostitution creates decidedly harsher conditions for the “providers of services,” such as:

- a clientele that feels even more entitled to engage in mental and physical abuse (including murder)
- the protection of the pimps (who are now “legitimate businesspeople”) that sell the bodies (and minds) of their employees
- the protection of the clients (who are now “legitimately” purchasing services)<sup>53</sup>

There is a slew of denigrating and stigmatising epithets to refer to prostitutes, some of which are “business-related,” including: *pro*, *professional*, *working woman*, and *working girl*. *Bitch* is another expression that is often used in the context of the “stable” of prostitutes a pimp has. It combines objectification, commodification, and the regarding of women as animals. The

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<sup>50</sup> Please click on this text for a permalink to an advertising image of a slim cow in a “sexy pose,” complete with “human-female thighs” and red lipstick.

<sup>51</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20181012185204/http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Prostitution#Human\\_trafficking\\_and\\_sexual\\_slavery](https://web.archive.org/web/20181012185204/http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Prostitution#Human_trafficking_and_sexual_slavery)

<sup>52</sup> Of humans, at least.

<sup>53</sup> Of course, without clients there would be no demand, and therefore no need for these women to sell their bodies in the first place.

*johns*<sup>54</sup> may call them *bitch* or *cunt*, and “slap them around,” but so long as they appear to be “happy,” these females are doing what they are supposed to, from the *patriarchal* perspective. That is, they are obsequiously serving the males.

In prostitution, sexual slavery, and other forms of sexual exploitation and oppression of females of all ages, their vaginas, anuses, breasts, and the rest of their bodies are used without a second thought to the well-being, self-determination, or personhood of the victims.

The denigration, abuse, torture, and humiliation of human females has its ultimate expression through *rape*, *prostitution*, and *pornography*, the three pillars within what [Dworkin \(1997\)](#) refers to as the *true trinity of woman-hating*. These are expounded upon in the *rape culture* example, in Chapter Three.

[Taylor \(2018\)](#) shares the following on internet pornography:

- 35% of all internet downloads are pornography-related (although she comments that some estimates are closer to 50%);
- This rapidly-growing market seeks to produce ever-more extreme content, targeting an ever-younger target audience.
- The flourishing hardcore pornography “genre” promotes the degradation, intimidation, coercion, infliction of pain, and rape of women.
- “Regular” people may incorporate the pornographic fantasies into their real-life sexual experiences, with deleterious consequences, such as increased violence against females, and teenagers being likelier to engage in risky sexual activity.
- Sex between men and children is increasingly presented as “mainstream.”

#### **2.2.19: Very brief notes on *rape and prostitution in war and conquest*:**

During World War II, hundreds of thousands of women were taken from territories occupied by Japan and forced into sexual slavery “in the service” of soldiers ([Stetz and Oh 2015](#)). This was perhaps the largest instance of organised military prostitution,<sup>55</sup> and the Japanese government

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<sup>54</sup> A *john* is a prostitute’s client. It is so common for a male to pay a female for sex, that even “the average John” does so. The expression *john* should not be capitalised, similar to the way *john* is a synonym for *toilet*. Uncapitalised is also more anonymous.

<sup>55</sup> This would be the largest instance of organised military prostitution *known and documented* so far.

“justified” the existence of these “*comfort stations*,”<sup>56</sup> “reasoning” that mass rape would be prevented, and to forestall the spreading of venereal disease among soldiers.<sup>57</sup>

The sexual slaves at the “comfort stations” were known as “*comfort women*.” “*Comfort woman*” is much more than just a euphemism. The word *comfort* evokes images of well-being, security, contentment, relaxation, and even solace. Through the use of this expression, they made it sound as if these women voluntarily and cheerfully gave of themselves to these “brave and honourable” *male patriots*.

Soldiers may be called by various less harmful sounding names, such as “*peacekeepers*,” “*humanitarian workers*,” or even “*observers*.” Biased and misleading names naturally do not change the nature of their presence, and there are innumerable cases where such “keepers of peace and human dignity” engage in sexual acts of all kinds with the people they are supposed to be protecting and helping. Whether it is “consensual sex”<sup>58</sup> or violent rape, soldiers (or however they may be euphemistically called), wherever they may be, consider the local “native” people their prey. To name just one specific scenario, [Bell, Flynn, and Martinez Machain \(2018\)](#) correlate the increased demand for forced prostitution that is created by the presence of “*United Nations peacekeepers*” in the locations where their “missions” take place.

## 2.2.20: All forms of subjugation and oppression are related.

[Bloodhart and Swim \(2010\)](#) point out how the harmful exploitation of animals and the environment is another manifestation of the hegemonic power men have over women in a *patriarchal society*. [Beirne \(1997\)](#) also draws parallels between the rapes of non-human animals and those of women, children, and infants, on account of the lack of consent, coercion, pain, and even death that may result.

Be they human females or non-human animals, the genitals and complete bodies of those that are commodified are victimised with a complete disregard for any suffering they may be subjected to, ranging from emotional slighting, though a lifetime of abuse and pain, to a grisly death. The language gives us the expressions that identify these concepts coupled with

<sup>56</sup> Those that were paid were “*working*” women, and their “*place of employment*” was a “*comfort station*.”

<sup>57</sup> Yet again, the interests of the *male perpetrators* are what’s being protected.

<sup>58</sup> The imbalance of power between a member of an occupying force, be it imperialistic or “peacekeeping” (often the same, but the latter with a “nicer,” more *biased* name), and a victim of war is too great to consider the latter be in a position of free consent.

their associated thoughts and feelings, and society is where the corresponding destructive behaviours are put into practice. And on top of this, they are linguistically vilified at every turn.

In Chapter three, eight example expressions will be inspected from the bias and exclusion perspectives; each of them with varying amounts to say on the subjugation and oppression of human females, particularly these:

***Boys will be boys*** summarises most of what is wrong with patriarchy, male hegemony, gender roles, victimisation of females, and the gender binary. This means that males do whatever they want, at the expense of females.

***Spinster*** represents one of the symptoms of the patriarchal oppression of women, as manifested by their not being allowed to make voluntary decisions in their own lives. So, females have to “choose” to be married by the time they are expected to be, or else!

***Rape culture*** provides insight into how the oppression of women extends to sexual violence and rape within a patriarchal and capitalistic society where “violence is sexy,” brutality against females is normalised, and the victims are blamed. The *rape culture* we live in makes the daily lives of most females an unending succession of reminders of who has the power, who is in control, and who employs force and violence to make certain that the established order of males over females is maintained.

***Victim blaming*** exposes the mechanisms employed to attribute partial or complete blame to all victims, including those harmed by any form of violence, including domestic, sexual, and rape, all of which are likelier to target females.

***Policing of masculinity*** embodies many of the deleterious manifestations of patriarchy, male hegemony, heteronormativity, and the gender binary, all of which work to subjugate and victimise females.

As far as non-human animals and the environment are concerned, as a whole it's *gendered* to be *female*. “*Mother nature*” is there to provide all we need (and too many people take a whole lot more than they require for subsistence), and in a *patriarchal society* there is no need to even say thanks or to show any kind of regard or appreciation.



## 2.3: Chapter Two, Part Two: Hispanic Peoples.

### 2.3.1: *Othering* of Hispanic Peoples from the cultural and sociolinguistic perspectives, as expressed through biased and exclusive usage in the English language, with historical background and fitting examples:

A key component of the marginalisation and oppression of Hispanic Peoples is their so often being portrayed through clichés that are equal parts hackneyed and derogatory. This promotes *othering* and exacerbates *xenophobic* tendencies that foster *exclusion* and *violence* against them.

The following list enumerates several of the most common *stereotypes*, which provide insight into how Hispanic Peoples are *othered* on television, on the radio, in movies, in books, in newspapers, in internet content, during conversations, and so on. Those *othering* range from prominent politicians through the “average person on the street.” The very brief comments between parentheses provide insight into the mechanisms of *othering*, including unwarranted vilification and “us” versus “them” messages, which should be of interest to lexicographers preparing inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries.

- bandits (“*they* are filthy crooks out to rob *us*”)
- drug lords or drug runners (“*they* are out to poison and addict *us*”)
- gang members (“*they* are out to get *us*”)
- illegal immigrants (“*they* should not be here with *us*”)
- inebriates (“*they* are always drunk”) and/or drug users (“*they* are always high on marijuana”)
- ultra suave and scheming “Latin lovers” (“*they* are out to steal *our* women”)
- meek, helpless, and/or exotic women who are usually curvaceous, good dancers, and sexually accessible (“*they*” are available for “consumption” by “*us*”)
- men who wash dishes or cars or are pimps (“that’s all *they* know how to do”)
- women who do domestic or cosmetology work or are prostitutes (“that’s all *they* are good for”)
- lazy bums sleeping all the time (often wrapped in a colourful blanket and propped against a wall)
- and as savage, poor, violent, thieving, dependent, slovenly, incorrigible, bad speakers of English, and so on.

And then there are the *racial slurs*. These pigeonhole, vilify, trivialise, dehumanize, objectify, denigrate, and/or ridicule Hispanic Peoples, and are a key part of keeping them down. Here are several examples:

- ***bandito*** (“scary” Mexican robber)
- ***beaner*** (“because *they* love beans”)
- ***greaser*** (“*they* are filthy and immoral”)
- ***hot tamale*** (“a hot and spicy señorita”)
- ***illegal*** (used as a dehumanising noun, as in “*you* are an *illegal*”)
- ***spic, spik, or spick*** (the closest thing to ***nigger*** a racist can use against a Hispanic)
- ***taco bender*** (“tacos must be bent, and *they* love tacos”)
- ***wetback*** (“*they* get wet entering the USA illegally through the Rio Grande”)

In this second part of the chapter, the contemptible ethnic slurs ***greaser*** and ***spic***, along with the ***bandito*** stereotype, will serve as examples of biased and exclusive expressions that are brutally colonialist, xenophobic, and racist. There will also be real-life illustrations of the cultural, institutional, and individual consequences of the use of such hate-filled epithets.

It will be shown how “just a few well chosen words” can encapsulate a world of fear, hate, vilification, and oppression against whole groups of Peoples, in this case Hispanics. The *othering* of Hispanic Peoples is representative of the ways that all *out-groups* are othered.

### 2.3.2: Greaser.

**greaser** *n* Offensive and denigrating expression to refer to or address a person of Hispanic descent, especially Mexican. Evokes images of extreme filth, be it moral and/or corporal. The expression may have originated as a reference to the menial job of greasing the axles of mule carts, an unpleasant task performed by Mexican labourers, but more likely from the way ignorant people “saw” an imaginary resemblance between the colour of the skin of Mexican people and grease.

For over 150 years the ethnic slur *greaser* has been utilised [mostly] in the USA to disparage and denigrate people of Mexican origin or appearance, by unsbtly attempting to invoke

images of greasy hair and skin, and a propensity towards crime ([Morín, 2016](#)). Leading up to the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848, many *US Americans* considered their protestant Anglo selves to be superior to the Mexican Hispanic Catholics, the latter being seen as savage, dishonest, degenerate, and criminal ([Tucker, et al, 2013](#)). In addition, during this time many US Americans believed in *manifest destiny*, and had no problem going along with feeble “justifications” for the taking of land from Mexico, including that it “would improve the Mexicans.” ([Tucker, et al, 2013:381](#))

**American and US American** In this dissertation the term *American* is **not** used as a noun or adjective to refer to the people of the **United States of America** (USA), their form of English, their culture, and so on. Nor is *America* utilised to refer to the United States of America (USA) as a country. This is because *America* encompasses the continents of South America, Central America, and North America, not just those and that lie between Canada and Mexico. Therefore, the term *American* means anyone or anything within the continents here mentioned, and to refer to those and that of the **USA**, *US American* will be used. Similarly, *America* will refer to the collective territories of these continents. This is done for mainly two reasons: a) this usage is more precise, and b) it does not disregard, downplay, or trivialise any people or anything else in or regarding these continents. In cases where American appears within quotations marks it is to highlight how most *US Americans* use the term (as if they are the only people in *America*). **Additional note:** for added precision, the proper demonyms and country adjectives for each specific country, land, People, and so on, may be utilised, as in: Cherokee, Haitian, or Montevidean.

**manifest destiny** The following text, quoted from the *Dictionary of American history* ([Kutler, 2003:222](#)) does not just define the expression, it also is representative of imperialism mentality (*us* over and at the expense of *them*) in general:

“In 1845 John L. O’Sullivan<sup>59</sup> coined the term “manifest destiny” in reference to a growing conviction that the United States was preordained by their god to

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<sup>59</sup> According to *The American yawp: a massively collaborative open U.S. history textbook* ([Locke & Wright, 2019](#)), O’Sullivan was a “popular editor and columnist” at the time. [Please click here for a permalink.](#)

expand throughout North America and exercise hegemony over its neighbors. In the United States Magazine and Democratic Review (July–August 1845, p. 5) he argued for “the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions.” Around the time of O’Sullivan’s writing, the United States saw an extraordinary territorial growth of 1.2 million square miles, an enlargement of more than 60 percent. Most of this growth occurred at the expense of the newly independent Mexico and the Native American nations. The expansion happened at such an accelerated pace that people like O’Sullivan thought that even larger expansions were inevitable, necessary, and desirable—hence the origin of the concept of manifest destiny.”

So, the US Americans embarked on the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848, which eventually resulted in the USA adding over 1.3 million square kilometres to its territories ([Bates, 2015](#)). During this time US soldiers referred to Mexicans as *greasers* as a part of the long-standing tradition of imperialistic armies dehumanising their colonialism and war victims. Never mind that in this case it was them doing the raping, murdering, plundering, and devastation while invading another country.

**gringo** *n* Person, especially from the USA, UK, or other Anglo descent, who is considered uncaring of Hispanic or Latin American culture and people, and/or who are present there to exploit. Used pejoratively. **Gringa** is used for females.

### 2.3.2.1: The *dehumanisation* of the victims of colonialism and war through contemptible *ethnic slurs*.

The dehumanisation of enemies, be they victims of imperialistic wars or otherwise, emboldens the aggressors (since they are not “really killing people”), and helps to either incense the population in general against those “subhuman beasts” or to simply not care (again, since “they are not really people.”)

A modern iteration of this can be seen in the expression *bug splat*:

**bug splat** – *drone strike victims, drone attack victims, victims of drone strikes, victims of drone attacks, victims of drone warfare*. A psychological ploy of a highly manipulative nature including, but not limited to, these three primary goals: 1) make

killing from afar sound like a video or child's game where winning means getting rid of unwanted pests, 2) dehumanize the victims, thus making it even easier to press the "kill button," as only vermin are being eradicated, and 3) maintain an indifferent general population, as it's merely insects involved (and to date mostly only in foreign "insignificant" lands, at that).

Such expressions express hate, fear, and violence on the part of the aggressors, and multiply the helplessness, injury, offence, fear, and pain experienced by the victims.

Even before the invaders had seized what they wanted from the Mexicans, they started taking from the other Peoples who were there before their arrival: the *Native Americans* (less properly known as *American Indians*). These were the first victims of US American genocide, beginning upon their arrival ([Ostler, 2015](#)). Both groups were demonised and *othered*, what was theirs was forcibly taken, and they continue to be oppressed to this day. The following is a revealing selection of denigrating expressions that were utilised to dehumanise and vilify the "Indians," with brief comments:

**Injun** *n* Simply a colloquial alteration of *Indian*, but enough to show the Native Americans (and other invaders) that they had such little regard for their victims that they could not even be bothered to properly use the name they (the invaders) themselves had assigned to the native inhabitants, whose land they took.

**prairie nigger** Another example of the incorporation of *nigger*, which is perhaps the most hate-laden word in the English language.

**red nigger** Yet again, the absolute contempt for their victims includes the word *nigger*.

**redskin** *n, adj* For many people, just the skin colour (real, or conjured up) is enough to stereotype and hate. There are still hundreds of sports teams whose name and/or mascot is/are mocking and denigrating racist "Indian" names such as *Redskins* and "*Chief Wahoo*." ([Fenelon, 2016](#)).

**squaw** *n* Utilised to refer to an "Indian" woman. This is problematic for several reasons, including that *squaw* also can refer to the female genitalia, and that it was and still is used by many as a synonym for *nigger* when it comes to "Indian women."

(I employ quotes, since people who use “Indian” are not likely to use “Native American.”)

**timber nigger** The obsession that Anglo people have with *nigger* is that: an obsession. This particular expression is sometimes used in a “giggly” way by racists who enjoy a rhyme with the word *nigger*.

Each and every one of these loathsome expressions is still in current use.

### 2.3.2.2: The “musings” of a war correspondent, as a part of institutional dehumanisation and othering.

War correspondents are often seen in movies as “heroes” selflessly putting themselves at risk in order to “tell truth to power,” an example being “*The Killing Fields*” (1984) ([McLaughlin, 2016:2](#)). Then there is real life. In 1995, as a part of the work of the USA and United Nations to enforce their goals in the Balkans, the USA military embedded reporters with the “troops on the ground” in an effort to accomplish mainly three things: 1) get public support from the general USA population for the military operation, 2) boost the morale of soldiers, and 3) use the media to push for compliance ([McLaughlin, 2016](#)). This was supposed to be the first instance of the “*embedded reporter system*” ([McLaughlin, 2016:141](#)). Not quite. Almost a century and a half earlier there was this:

In 1846, *The Daily Picayune* (New Orleans, USA) published the “contemplations” of journalist George Wilkins Kendall<sup>60</sup>, direct from the combat zone in the Mexican-American war ([Tucker, et al, 2013:847](#)). He was commenting on how Mexicans who had “crept back” to their homes after fleeing at the start of the “onset of active hostilities,” amongst other musings:

*“They find some of their houses better ventilated than when they left them; for your cannon ball walks in without knocking, and enters without so much as desiring you to open a door –cutting a road through roof or wall as may best suit its convenience.” ...*

*“Martin Scott —Capt. Martin Scott— you have not forgotten him, have you? If you*

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<sup>60</sup> George Wilkins Kendall was a well-known war correspondent at the time of the Mexican-American war ([Holsinger, 1999](#)).

*have, the coons have not; well, they tell a story of him, which perchance you have heard before, to the effect that during one of the recent battles he found leisure, besides bringing his command regularly into action, to indulge a little in his favorite pastime of target shooting, discharging a well-known gun of his no less than eight times at the Mexicans. If he did so, it is safe to presume that no less than eight of the Greasers — the Texans have given the Mexicans the cognomen of Greasers are not at the present time numbered among the living. The captain has probably wasted as little ammunition as any man alive — never throws away a shot.”*

In the following quoted passages “*in non-bold italic text framed by quotation marks*” there is no deficiency of material to comment on from the perspectives of *critical discourse analysis*, *intersectionality*, and *critical reality awareness*, as this report is laden with astonishing amounts of racism, barbarous contempt, and a complete lack of compassion. ***(My comments, with the insight provided by these frameworks for language scrutiny, are in bold and italic between parentheses):***

- “*They find some of their houses better ventilated than when they left them*” ***(may have been “light-heartedly” referring to his perceived uncleanness of the “greasers,” so the cannon balls would be “doing them a favour” by “airing these houses out” with the massive holes).***
- “*for your cannon ball walks in without knocking, and enters without so much as desiring you to open a door*” ***(tells of the overwhelming might “we” have over “them,” and how there is no escape from “us.” To resist “us” is futile, so “you” just give “us” what you have, or suffer the consequences).***
- “*cutting through roof or wall as may best suit its convenience*” ***(makes it sound like the cannon balls have a will of their own, so the soldiers are “not really guilty of anything.”)***

In the next paragraph he went on about a certain Captain Martin Scott, about whom he writes:

- “*Martin Scott — Capt. Martin Scott — you have not forgotten him, have you?*” ***(is indicative that “good citizens” do not forget their “war heroes.”)***



- “If you have, the coons<sup>61</sup> have not; well, they tell a story of him, which perchance you have heard before, to the effect that during one of the recent battles he found leisure, besides bringing his command regularly into action, to indulge a little in his favorite pastime of target shooting, discharging a well-known gun of his no less than eight times at the Mexicans.” (*This tells about how the lives of “others” have no value other than as shooting targets*).
- “If he did so, it is safe to presume that no less than eight of the Greasers —the Texans have given the Mexicans the cognomen of Greasers are not at the present time numbered among the living” (*gives him the opportunity to include a hate-filled slur that further dehumanises “them,” “shows off” how accurately he can shoot and hit the [human] targets, and again pits “us” (Texans) against “them” (Greasers). This is also presumably an attempt at humour at the expense of murder victims*).
- “The captain has probably wasted as little ammunition as any man alive — never throws away a shot” (*should mean that any ammunition that does not kill “them” is wasted*).

Finally, to end this piece:

*“I saw a little Mexican lieutenant — a sinister looking scoundrel with an extremely bad face — set off to Point Isabel yesterday as a prisoner. He was caught beating and otherwise maltreating one of his wounded countrymen, and endeavoring to force him to join the forces of Arista” (with this he helps insure that the reader will have a negative impression of the Mexican, because to him he is):*

- *little* (presumably in stature and “as a man”)
- *sinister* (“so we must fear him (one of *them*), since *they* are menacing.”)
- *a scoundrel* (“one of *them* out to cheat *us*”)
- *extremely bad face* (“sounds scary”)
- *a prisoner* (he must be guilty of a crime)
- *beating one of his countrymen* (to him, Mexicans are *countrymen* if they are being maltreated, since *countrymen* is otherwise usually reserved for “*our compatriots*”)
- *maltreating a wounded countryman* at that (no “heroic American soldier” would do *that*)
- *inciting treason* (if he tried to get the beaten soldier to help the Mexicans then to “*us*” he is a traitor)

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<sup>61</sup> **Coon** is a repugnant expression utilised to refer to a black person, and has roughly the same contemptuous force as **nigger**.



These were *not* just insane ramblings by someone no one heard. This was racist discourse being meted out by a well-known person at the time ([Holsinger, 1999](#)) who had *privileged* access to the press. The publishing newspaper propagated this racist diatribe, which combined with countless instances of such discourse in society, promote the maintenance of the established order of oppression of *othered* groups. In this case US Americans over Mexicans. He makes it clear: the “Americans” have it all, and anyway take at will what “others” (on this occasion the Mexicans) have. Their land, their resources, their women.

The “Americans” are on top, and it is they who exclusively decide the fate of the “others.” The “others” *will* submit, or the “others” can die! The goal was to further stir up violent and virulent xenophobia, and it, along with other such discourse has been successful. To this day there is a great deal of violence and oppression of *gringos* against Mexicans and Hispanics in general ([Gómez, 2018](#)). More on this later in this section.

### 2.3.2.3: The “Greaser Act.”

But before that, getting back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a few years later, in 1855, the state of California (USA) enacted an “anti-vagrancy law” which was generally known as the “Greaser Act,” specifically targeting people of Mexican origin or appearance ([Morín, 2016](#)). The epithet was in such common use and slung with such impunity, that the slur *greaser* was *literally* included in the wording of the statute ([Bender, Aldana, Carrasco, and Avila, J.G., 2015](#)).

[Bender \(2003\)](#) points out that the film industry started to depict Mexicans as *greasers* through the hackneyed *bandito* image as far back as silent films, including films having the word *greaser* in the title, such as the 1908 short film “*The Greaser’s Gauntlet*” directed by D.W. Griffith. Over the next decades, *banditos* appeared in many prominent movies, where they were portrayed as murderous, lying, filthy, and thieving. These films included classics such as “*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*” (1948) ([Bender, 2003](#)). These *banditos* were also displaying their “*tequila-swilling, gun-slinging tendencies*” in popular films such as “*¡Three Amigos!*” (1986) ([Bender, 2003:33](#)).

Mexicans would later be featured as part of *street gangs* (they had already appeared enough as *banditos* in “western-type” films featuring *gangs along rural roads*, such as

those already mentioned), and in general as criminals who from the 1950s through the 1990s outpaced white and black characters as “*television’s designated criminals*” ([Bender, 2003:32](#)).

With such governmental, military, and media support, *greaser* inevitably maintained its popularity as an *othering* epithet. [De León \(2010\)](#) in “*They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas*,” provides an entire book dedicated to the exploration of the hate and intolerance of the “white mind” that leads to the institutionally sanctioned debasement, oppression, violence, and above all the prevalent racism of many US Americans against Mexicans, as exemplified by this reprehensible slur.

Now, on to the present, where anti-Mexican sentiment continues to be stoked by the media and politicians.

#### **2.3.2.4: The mouthpiece of the USA power elite vs. Mexico:**

During his successful 2016 campaign for president of the USA, Donald Trump uttered any number of racist rants, including this on Mexicans:

*“When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best.. . .They’re sending people that have lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.”*  
([Huber, 2016:222](#))

Although he did manage to not use any racial slurs such as *greaser* or *spic*, the demonization and *us* vs. *them* rhetoric was clearly there.

Those that are filled with fear and hate, and who voice their intolerance, don’t usually limit themselves to “one target group.” To name one out of countless highly contemptible and virulently racist utterances Trump made as USA president, there is the following:

In a 2018 article called “[Trump’s ‘Shithole’ Moment Is His Ugliest Yet; The president’s racism is more than a character flaw – it’s driving U.S. policy](#),” there is this:

*“Denouncing Haiti, El Salvador, and African nations as “shitholes” – while pleading for more immigrants from Scandinavia – Donald Trump did more than reveal*

*personal racism. He made plain that U.S. immigration policy is now being driven by animus toward black and brown people.*"<sup>62</sup>

What, exactly, has improved over the last centuries?

### 2.3.3: *Spic*:

The second racial epithet to be carefully examined is *spic*, which has been in use over a century ([Dalzell, 2018](#)).

#### 2.3.3.1: An example of the early use of *spic* to refer to Hispanic Peoples, to *other* and victimise them.

**spic** *n* Also spelled **spik**, or **spick**. Contemptible and denigrating epithet to refer to or address a person of Hispanic descent. Likely origin is an alteration of "no *speak* English." It is the Hispanic equivalent of *nigger*; just as violently spoken by a racist, just as deeply offensive to the victim.

In *Down on the killing floor: Black and white workers in Chicago's packinghouses*, [Halpern \(1997:82\)](#) describes racism and violence in the 1920s in a section of Chicago (USA) that had so many packinghouses<sup>63</sup> that it was known as Packingtown. One "vignette" reads so:

*"The Mexicans' appearance and language set them apart from other immigrant groups and made them easy targets for bigotry. Violent clashes between Mexicans and Polish youths occurred regularly. "Practically every Saturday, if you didn't kill one or two Mexicans, you sent them to the hospital," recalled one Packingtown resident with only slight exaggeration. Encarnación Chico, one of the first Mexicans to settle in the area in the 1920s remembered learning to avoid the alley and dimly lit streets where whites waited in ambush<sup>64</sup> for 'spics' and 'greasers'."*

<sup>62</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/trumps-shithole-moment-is-his-ugliest-yet-205087/>

<sup>63</sup> **packinghouse** - noun: "an establishment for slaughtering livestock and processing and packing meat, meat products, and by-products." Definition by the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. [Please click on this text for a permalink.](#)

<sup>64</sup> These packinghouse "macho men" are reminiscent of the "beef curtain" "caricatures of masculinity" described earlier in this chapter. Again, with what seems to be an endless supply of *othering*, intolerance, hate, and violence.

The use of *spic* “on the streets,” in schools, homes, and workplaces has continued unabated, including frequent appearances in books, television, and movies, including the popular film “*West Side Story*” (1961)<sup>65</sup>, in which the slur appears several times, along with other denigrating references, such as Puerto Ricans “*multiply, like cockroaches.*” ([Maertens and Codde, 2016:12](#)) In another instance, the actors representing Hispanic characters in this film emphatically state things like “*But us, foreigners!, lice! cockroaches!*” ([Woller, 2011:90](#)), exemplifying how such demeaning and dehumanising concepts become internalised. Other oversimplified formulations of Hispanic Peoples portrayed in this film include the Spanish-speaking characters having a heavy accent (implying a mental and/or linguistic deficiency), and as being violent and homicidal ([Maertens and Codde, 2016](#)).

Apropos “*la cucaracha*.”<sup>66</sup> The noteworthy film “*Wall Street*” (1987)<sup>67</sup> deals realistically with wealth, power, avarice, climbing up financially by hook or crook, and finally crashing back down. Once the intrepid protagonist starts to make some “real money,” he is shown a splendid apartment in the “Upper East Side” (New York City’s (USA) most exclusive neighbourhood) ([Shnayerson, 2014](#)), with the real estate agent proclaiming, among other things, that:

*“...everybody tells ya they hate the Upper East Side and they wanna live on the West Side but honey when it comes to resale time, believe me the East Side’s the one that always moves...”*<sup>68</sup>

Later in the movie, when the ambitious star is plummeting back to earth and is desperately trying to sell that apartment he had bought, the real estate agent says (in the original theatrical version of this film):

*“...the market is dead now. Even the rich are bitching. The only thing that’s moving is the Puerto Ricans and the cockroaches, and with the commission I get...”*<sup>69</sup>

This was considered by some people to be an insult to Puerto Ricans, since they were being associated with cockroaches. When the director and producer were asked to remove this

<sup>65</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190729213517/https://tuftsdaily.com/archives/2001/04/01/west-side-story-stereotypes-puerto-ricans/>

<sup>66</sup> “*Cucaracha*” is “*cockroach*” in Spanish.

<sup>67</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190729214518/https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Wall\\_Street\\_\(1987\\_film\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20190729214518/https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Wall_Street_(1987_film))

<sup>68</sup> Transcribed from the original version of “*Wall Street*.”

<sup>69</sup> Transcribed from the original version of “*Wall Street*.”

comment, they promptly did so ([AP News, 1988](#)). The updated version of this line in the film reads so:

*“...the market’s dead, hon, even the rich are bitching, nothing’s moving except **termites and cockroaches**, and with my commission being what it is...”<sup>70</sup>*

### 2.3.3.2: From the court case of *Gómez v. Hug*, an instance of the physical violence that can accompany the spitting out of violent slurs.

The inclusion of this, and the next, vulgar, offensive, and disturbing passages, along with the corresponding commentary is meant to try to convey the hate and violence of the perpetrators, along with the vulnerability and pain of the victims. Lexicographers preparing inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries should be able to appreciate the situation that victims and those subjugated past and present have had and have. These examples help illustrate how othering and exclusive expression goes beyond “just words” in real life.

Returning to the government and its *othering* and *oppression* of Hispanic Peoples, the following example from a *Board of County Commissioners*<sup>71</sup> illustrates that it’s not just in the elected officials of the upper echelons of government where racism and violence reside. One can’t know everything that may have been said before the following passage, but one can know for certain that the use of particular words in specific ways reveals a great deal:

“Consider *Gómez v. Hug*. In this case the defendant (Hug), a member of the ***Board of County Commissioners*** of Shawnee County, had referred to the plaintiff (Gómez), a supervisor of Shawnee County fairgrounds and who also happened to be of Hispanic ethnicity, as a “***fucking spic***,” in front of both Gómez and Gómez’s immediate superior, and had then proceeded to directly address Gomez with the words, “*You are a fucking spic*” and “*You are nothing but a fucking Mexican greaser, nothing but a pile of shit.*” ([Brown, 2018:22](#)) (The highlighting of specific expressions is mine).

[Gómez addresses Hug]: “Commissioner, you have repeatedly stated that remark throughout the day and in the past day or two. Can you give me your interpretation of

<sup>70</sup> Transcribed from the updated version of “*Wall Street*.”

<sup>71</sup> *Board of County Commissioners* are elected in some USA States, and they run the county to which they were elected.

a *fucking spic*?' He said, 'You are a *fucking spic*.' I said, 'What does it mean?' He said, 'A *fucking Mexican greaser* like you, that is all you are. You are nothing but a fucking *Mexican greaser*, nothing but a *pile of shit*.' And he repeated it over and over and he *raised his fist* and he said, 'Now what are you going to do about it?' He got that close to me (indicating) and said, 'What are you going to do about it?' He kept hollering it out and hollering it out. He said, 'Go ahead and do something about it, you *fucking Mexican greaser*. I have told you what you are. You are nothing but a *fucking spic*.' And he repeated it over and *he kept shaking his fists in front of my eyes and pounding on the desk* and he would come up to me and say, 'Are you going to do something, you *coward*, you *greaser*, you *fucking spic*? What are you going to do? Don't stand there like a damn fool because that is all you are is a *pile of shit*.'

([Court of Appeals of Kansas, USA, 1982](#)) (The highlighting of specific expressions is mine).

These instances of sustained and even life-threatening hate speech are made possible not just by racist individuals, but by a *racist culture*. A society and culture that encourage such disdain for *others*, that there is the widespread use of expressions such as *spic* and *greaser*, as a part of the overall *othering*. Calling someone a "*fucking asshole*," and "*nothing but a pile of shit*" is insulting enough, but, when combined with "*fucking spic*" and "*fucking Mexican greaser*," the taunting ("are you going to do something, you coward,") and even threats of imminent physical violence ("he kept shaking his fists in front of my eyes and pounding on the desk"), the humiliation, degradation, and complete obliteration of human dignity (and risk of serious injury) not only cause horrible pain to the victim, but also encourages other violent and hate-filled racists to do such things as well.

Each and every time that words like *spic* and *greaser* are uttered, fear, hate, violence, othering, and oppression in general are encouraged.

### 2.3.3.3: A further note on who "gets to *abuse power*," from the perspectives of *critical discourse analysis*, *intersectionality*, and *critical reality awareness*.

Ideologically-based discourse plays a key role in the exercise (and abuse) of power, and in the preservation of such oppressive societal conditions ([Van Dijk, 2015](#)). In this instance, not only did Hug (in the dominant "*in-group*") violently insult and threaten Gómez (in a subjugated "*out-group*"), but it was probably *only* he who could do the offending and

threatening. If it had been Gómez (in the subordinate group) calling Hug thinks like “*you racist motherfucking asshole*,” “*you white supremacist shithead*,” or “*you **honky** pile of shit*,” Gómez would have likely have had to have paid an even steeper price. That is to say, that despite the vicious insults and threats of imminent physical violence that Gómez was intimidated and threatened by, that it somehow could have been even worse for the victim if he had in any way challenged the established order of *in-groups* abusing *out-groups*.

**honky** *n* Also spelled **honkie**, or **honkey**. A disparaging expression utilised to refer to or address white people. Used especially by black people. Perhaps from the word *Xonq*, meaning red in Wolof; maybe referring to the red ears of the invaders kidnapping people to be sold as slaves. The *x* in Wolof is pronounced like a guttural *h* in English. Note from the sociolinguistic point of view, especially from the critical discourse analysis and critical reality awareness perspectives: it is debatable how offensive an epithet directed at the dominating and oppressing group really is. Sure, many whites may get offended, but likelier at the “insolence” of the *others* to use any word to address them other than “*sir*,” “*madam*,” or “*ma’am*.”

A brief note on whites, blacks, and the use of “*sir*.”

While on the topic of “*The ‘etiquette’ of Race Relations*,” [Ritterhouse \(2006:3-4\)](#) highlights this:

“In the South, it could be and often was a black person's appreciation of the fact that if he or she did not say “yes *sir*” to a white man, that the white man might respond with an epithet, a blow, or even lethal force”. (The original text had the emphasis on the word “*sir*.”)

Within the framework of *critical reality awareness*, it is clear to understand that many people, black or otherwise, loathe hearing an everyday reminder of the *established order* being summarised in a single, “harmless” word: *sir*.

Speaking of epithets, the “etiquette” of race relations, and lethal force, next to be examined is a horrific account of events that should be helpful in gaining further insight into the role language plays when it comes to fear, hate, *othering*, and murderous violence.



### 2.3.3.4: The murder of Luis Ramírez.

Luis Ramírez paid the ultimate price *others* often have to pay. In a gruesome murder, appropriately described by [Johnson and Ingram \(2012:1629\)](#) as “a modern-day lynching<sup>72</sup>,” we have the following:

From ([López, 2012](#)): In Shenandoah (Pennsylvania, USA) on July 12, 2008, Luis Ramírez, a Mexican immigrant was beaten to death by a group of six Shenandoah Valley High School [American] football players. When the murderers, all white, saw Ramírez, they shouted racial epithets while proceeding to punch and kick him, even after he was beaten to the ground. One perpetrator (Derrick Donchak) had a thick piece of metal clenched in his fist to multiply the force of each blow, and another (Brandon Piekarsky) “kicked Ramírez in the head while on the ground” ([López, 2012:158](#)).

From ([Johnson and Ingram, 2012](#)): These supposedly upstanding youths had been drinking, were asked to leave a party after an altercation, and came across Luis Ramírez and Roxanne Rector. The murderers spoke to Rector, who was white, and Ramírez responded in Spanish. The football players then proceeded to spit out racist slurs and to thoroughly beat and kick him, ultimately murdering him.

During the pummelling, the athletes shouted many racially motivated hate-speech slurs and threats, including: “*This is Shenandoah. This is America. Go back to Mexico.*” Another called Ramirez a “*Spic.*” Still another youth told Ramírez to “[g]et the fuck out of here.” “*Another teen repeatedly punched Ramirez in the face, calling him a ‘fucking Spic’.*” In addition: “*Fucking Mexican,*” “*Fuck you Spic,*” “*go home, you Mexican motherfucker,*” and “*Tell your fucking Mexican friends to get the fuck out of Shenandoah or you’re going to be fucking laying next to him*” ([Johnson and Ingram, 2012:1630-1631](#)).

As seen in this example, although the use of *spic* may be accompanied by physical violence, the *threat* of violence is *always* there<sup>73</sup>. It is not a coincidence that these attackers shouted *spic* repeatedly. The use of this epithet “empowers” the perpetrators since the targets of their

<sup>72</sup> In general language use, and especially in a sociolinguistic context, the word **lynching** should be immediately associated with the murdering of black people by a gangs of white supremacist thugs.

<sup>73</sup> This is similar to the way females may be bombarded by lewd remarks, unwanted sexual innuendo, and the like. Even if “nothing comes of it” on any given occasion, there is always the reminder that at any given moment words can become physical acts, including sexual aggression and rape. There will be more on this in the *rape culture* example.



hate are *dehumanised* and *othered*, while the victims are being buffeted by feelings of denigration and helplessness. Even before a specific incident of verbal violence occurs, the victims are already in a vulnerable position knowing that they have been targeted by such language, and that they will regrettably likely be targeted again. This makes it ever harder for them to defend themselves from such hate speech.

Aside from the emotional and physical violence (in this case resulting in death) the victims suffer from such *hate crimes*, all others in the *out-groups* can be affected. These white athletes certainly got their racist and violent message across. Ramírez was murdered, and the rest of the “Mexicans” (and perhaps Hispanics in general, and blacks, and others in *out-groups*) “had been put on notice” by this group of hooligans. So it would be very understandable and sadly expected that any person in this or any *out-group* would be likely to become anxious or scared, quite justifiably, when white males approached them.

#### 2.3.4: *Bandito*:

This part of the chapter closes with the *bandito* stereotype, one of many *Hispanic/Latin@* oversimplified and formulaic representations that have been exploited on film, television, print and electronic media, “history” books, internet commentary, and so on.

**bandito** *n* Also spelled **bandido**. A robber who usually seeks their victims among travellers through isolated areas. They are often a part of a gang, and are stereotypically considered to be Mexicans with huge sombreros, bandoliers, tobacco-stained teeth, bad English accents, etc. From Spanish *bandido*, a robber who operates in isolated areas or near rural roads.

**Hispanic** *n, adj* pertaining to, characteristic of, and in general referring to the people, culture, and countries in Central and South America whose main language is Spanish. Also used as a noun. Since Hispanic people can come from twenty or so countries, and each country has its regions, and so on, as a whole they may be referred to as *Hispanic Peoples*. The “p” in Peoples is capitalised the same that demonyms, such as Argentinian or Bolivian, are. **Note:** Many people currently use *Hispanic* and *Latin@* interchangeably.

**Latin@** *n, adj* pertaining to, characteristic of, and in general referring to the people, culture, and countries in Central and South America whose main language is derived from Latin. Also used as a noun. **Notes:** The “@” at the end of **Latin@** incorporates both genders: Latina (feminine) and Latino (masculine). When used as a noun, **Latin@** also embraces both genders. **Latin@s** is the plural form. Many people currently use **Latin@** and **Hispanic** interchangeably.

As mentioned earlier in this section, ([Bender, 2003](#)) points out that the film industry started to portray Mexicans as *greasers* through the conventionalised *bandito* depiction as far back as silent films, an *othering* “tradition” that was continued for several decades. Several other oversimplified and persistent concoctions of Hispanic Peoples are also enumerated at the beginning of this section, and any given film might incorporate more than one of them. In the Western comedy “¡Three Amigos!,” for instance, there are the following, among several others:

- *banditos* with bad teeth, bandoliers, multiple guns, and who are in a “perpetual greasy unkempt sweat.”
- inebriates
- meek, helpless, and exotic women
- helpless general population
- villains that are unscrupulous and buffoonish
- characters with “bad” English accents. Basically every Hispanic person in the film has one. That helps viewers “identify” who *they* are, in addition to belittling all Hispanics in the film by “correlating” any deficiencies in English with a lack of mental abilities.

Viewers of films and television programming, readers of books or the press, listeners to the radio, internet surfers, and so on are able to identify these hackneyed negative traits no matter how often they have seen and/or heard them. Be it for the first time, where they start to “learn about *them*,” or after they have seen how different and ridiculous *they* are portrayed time and time again. These demeaning, vilifying, and reductive representations promote dehumanisation and *othering* ([Rosenthal, Volkmann, & Zagratzki, 2018](#)), in addition to being internalised by the victimised *out-group* ([Blakesley, 2016](#)).

### 2.3.4.1: An example of how easy film makers make it for “us” to identify “them” in “¡Three Amigos!” and “The Treasure of the Sierra Madre.”

Clichéd conceptions that are recognised onscreen are supposed to make “us” laugh, at the expense of “them” ([Berg, 2002](#)). Several of the vilifying and demeaning *bandito* stereotypes seen in “¡Three Amigos!” were just enumerated. While in “¡Three Amigos!” the formulaic *bandito* construct was *clownishly* represented, in “The Treasure of the Sierra Madre,” the *banditos* were portrayed *barbarically*. In this latter film, “they” are depicted as murderous, evil, cowardly, and above all *savage* “foreigners.” Therefore, “we” should be scared of “them.” As in “¡Three Amigos!”, “they” had stained teeth, greasy hair, bandoliers, big hats, were in a perpetual unkempt sweat, and had “bad English.”

### 2.3.4.2: A bit on colonialism, forced English, and “harmless funny accents” heard on TV, in movies, on the radio, internet entertainment content, etc.

The imposition of English instruction in colonised territories continues to be a part of the “status” English enjoys as a global language [Hsu \(2015\)](#). This forced use of English has, and continues to oppress victims of invasions at the expense of their own language and culture.

This certainly also occurs within the USA. [Darder \(2014\)](#) explains how “language minority” (in this case not having English as a first language) students in many public schools in Western States in the USA who are compelled to be in an English-only scholastic environment are supposedly at fault for any failure to succeed. So, for instance, Mexican families with children whose first language is Spanish have an already difficult adaptation process made even harsher.

These students are then blamed for any possible lack of academic success, in an often-seen *victim-blaming*<sup>74</sup> scenario. Depending on the specific teachers or administrators, a student whose English-speaking skills are not yet good enough will already be at a further disadvantage. This is all a part of the “*enduring legacy of cultural hegemony and racialized language policies associated with centuries of colonialism.*” ([Darder \(2014:35\)](#)) There may even be *othering* when English is spoken, but not the way “it is expected” (and therefore *required*) to be.

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<sup>74</sup> The concept of *victim blaming* will be explored as one of the example expressions in Chapter Three.

So, having movie (or TV or radio or internet) dialogue with a “comical foreign-accent” gets several messages across, among them:

- whoever came up with such an idea, yet again, is unoriginal and not particularly resourceful
- no effort has been made to be sensitive, or to avoid insulting other people
- “we” and “they” are reminded, yet again, of who is in the *in-group*, and who is in the *out-group*
- there is reinforcement of the “English speakers above all others” mentality

### 2.3.4.3: Higher sales through *othering*.

*Cinco de mayo* celebrations, along with other days “honouring the heritage of different people,” such as *St. Patrick’s day* give myriad libation lovers yet another excuse to booze away. The producers and distributors of alcoholic beverages don’t seem to mind vilifying and trivialising others as a way to boost their sales of beer, rum, tequila, cocktails, etc. ([Alamillo, 2009](#)).

The *greaser* cliché lives on through the *bandito* stereotype ([Stockwell, 2002](#)). In one “harmless” embodiment, the snacks brand *Frito-Lay*<sup>75</sup> had a marketing campaign featuring a trivialised and formulaic *bandito* called the “*Frito Bandito*,” complete with a big hat (including a bullet hole, for effect), a wispy moustache, two bandoliers, a gold tooth, a gun in hand, and a bag of “cronchy”<sup>76</sup> “Fritos” corn chips. He was a cartoon mascot based on an easily recognisable stereotype ([Klemsdal and Sundt, 2017](#)), who appeared in animated and print ads between 1967 ([Behnken, and Smithers, 2015](#)) and 1971 ([Foley, 2014](#)).

The *Frito Bandito* ads drove not just sales, but also feelings of inferiority among “Mexican-American” children, along with *othering* on the part of their Anglo classmates. The latter would single them out as “*banditos*,” as argued by the *National Mexican-American Anti-Defamation Committee* ([Foley, 2014](#)). The now defunct newspaper *La Raza*, which summarised the use of the *bandito* stereotype in less pleasant terms, stated that “*Chicanos* have become the media’s new nigger.” ([Foley, 2014:185](#))

<sup>75</sup> [Please click on this text for a permalink of the Frito-Lay website.](#)

<sup>76</sup> “Their “hint with a hammer” is: “*we*” say “crunchy,” and “*they*” say “cronchy.”

**Chicano** *n* A person originally from Mexico that lives in the USA. For the female gender, **Chicana** is used. **Chican@** is rapidly gaining popularity to embrace both genders. **Notes:** It is currently the ethnonym of choice by and for these People. Using the term *Mexican-American* is not advised; please see the comments on “*Mexican-American*” below. Any person that is born in the USA or that is naturalised, is a *US American*, regardless of where their parents are from.

**“Mexican-American”** *n* “Mexican-American” is in quotes, since such a person can be Mexican, or perhaps an “American.” Calling them *Mexican-American* connotes an “American-based” standard, similar to that seen in the use of “African-American.” As explained earlier, “America” is much more than just those and that between Canada and Mexico. And people, in this case *Mexicans*, are much more than just a “variety” of *US American* (“American” to most *US Americans*).

Happily, protests and help from Hispanic advocacy groups, such as the *National Mexican-American Anti-Defamation Committee*, helped end the *Frito Bandito* advertising campaign ([Behnken and Smithers, 2015](#)). With talk at the time of a huge lawsuit and a possible boycott of *Frito-Lay* products ([Foley, 2014](#)), one might surmise that another reason they did away with the *Frito Bandito* is that they did not want to risk hurting their sales of these and other snack products by alienating a key consumer group.

#### 2.3.4.4: *Banditos* stereotypes adapt to the times.

The representation of the clichéd image of *banditos* has been changed along with the times, since oppressors make sure that once a subjugated group is pinned under the jackboot of oppression, that they are kept down. In the case of *banditos*, they are still shown as *gangsters*, to be sure, but instead of being bedraggled and assaulting victims along desolate roads or “old West” type towns, they are now on the prowl for prey in big cities. Their current incarnations are either as *drug lords* or *inner-city gangbangers* ([Berg, 2002](#)).

In the film “*8 Million Ways to Die*” (1986), for instance, the protagonist is a drug lord who is just as bestial and ruthless as the Mexican *banditos* ([Bender, 2003](#)). His appearance is not bedraggled, but is instead squeaky-clean and expensively attired ([Berg, 2002](#)).

To name one other example out of many, in “*Bad Boys 2*” (2003)<sup>77</sup>, an action comedy with plenty of violence and gore, There is an “over the top” Cuban *drug lord* that combines:

- the clownish *bandito* concoction seen in the “¡*Three Amigos!*”
- the barbaric *bandito* conventionalised depiction in “*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*,” and
- the oversimplified formulation of a dapperly-clad drug-lord *bandito* seen in “*8 Million Ways to Die*.”

He is caricatured, zany, “scary,” impeccably dressed and coiffured when under control (not much of the time), and a bit too sweaty and dishevelled when not. His English is proper, but they just had to have him speak with a “heavy” accent.<sup>78</sup>

[Please click on this text for a permalink to see a still from the movie](#), taken from a scene in which the drug lord “loses it”<sup>79</sup> upon seeing the portrait the painters he commissioned came up with. He felt he was not portrayed “angelically enough” as the Christ in his vision of “*The Last Supper*.” As a “good father,” however, he kindly asked his daughter to cover her ears (Bible in hand) before he started cursing. In all, it is a preposterous scenario which viewers are likely to associate not just with this character in this movie, but with Hispanics as an *othered* group in general.

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<sup>77</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190728225959/https://www.sonyictures.com/movies/badboysii>

<sup>78</sup> As mentioned, that helped make sure that viewers recognised him as one of *them*.

<sup>79</sup> In this context, to “lose it” is to “have an emotional outburst.” Yet another “typical characteristic” of Hispanics and Latin@s, especially the males, is that they are supposed to be “hot headed.”

## 2.4: Chapter Two conclusions:

Throughout this chapter it was shown that language plays an indispensable part in the exploitation, vilification, othering, oppression, and violence perpetrated against victims. This was accomplished through the use of a *sociolinguistic* and *sociocultural* framework, based on the insight that analytical methods such as *critical discourse analysis*, *critical reality awareness*, and *intersectionality* provide. Through *critical reality awareness*, the quotidian realities of those that are subjugated and tormented are better understood, as is also the perspective of *non-oppressing* members of “dominant” groups who are willing to struggle for a more egalitarian society. Through all these, the supposed “justifications” for the subordination of females, other groups, and non-human animals were exposed for what they truly are: *patriarchal drivels*.

This chapter was divided into two parts. The first started by going into detail on the othering, gendering, and abuse of non-human animals, and how these are mapped over to the oppression of human females, along with the concomitant violence, exploitation, vilification, and subjugation. It was shown how females are linguistically and symbolically closely associated with animals, the latter having been deemed as “inferior,” which helps to “validate” the abuse of both. Within a patriarchal society, human females and non-human animals are demonised, trivialised, othered, and considered to be generally at the service of human males. Language is used as a weapon to “rationalise” this oppression and exploitation, and to help “keep women in their place.” *Sexism* and *speciesism* are connected; the manner in which females and non-human animals are oppressed and exploited is representative of how *all* oppression and exploitation work.

Key links between patriarchy and scientific research that purportedly evidence “female inferiority to males” were explored, including their downplaying of the importance of gestation and mothering in general. From the psychological perspective, compelling evidence was given to demonstrate that maybe it was really the envy males had (and still have) of women being able to gestate, give birth, breastfeed, and have a close emotional attachment with their offspring that prompted the fabrication of the so called *penis envy*.

There was also an examination of a variety of expressions that disparagingly correlate humans (with the negative connotations reserved mostly for *females*) with domesticated

animals, along with the corresponding sociolinguistic consequences. This chapter part concluded with a look at how the representation of women in the mass media, and spectacles such as beauty pageants, dehumanise and objectify all females. The ultimate denigration, abuse, torture, and humiliation of females is expressed through rape, sexual slavery, prostitution, and pornography, all of which are patriarchal weapons devoted to keeping all females subjugated.

The second part of the chapter explored in detail the othering of Hispanic Peoples from the cultural and sociolinguistic perspectives, as expressed through biased and exclusive usage in the English language. Historical background and vivid examples helped place everything in their proper perspective. It was shown how a key component of the marginalisation and oppression of Hispanic Peoples is their so often being portrayed through clichés that are equal parts hackneyed and disparaging, especially as seen through the mass media.

Factors, including racialised governmental language policies, unfair treatment in the legal and educational systems, and the use of discourse that exacerbates xenophobic tendencies that foster exclusion and violence against Hispanic Peoples were also explored.

The thorough examination of the slurs *greaser* and *spic*, along with the *bandito* stereotype, demonstrated how biased and exclusive expressions do nothing but harm. It was also shown how “just a few well chosen words” can encapsulate a world of hate and oppression against whole groups of Peoples, in this case Hispanics. The *othering* of Hispanic Peoples is representative of the ways that all *out-groups* are othered.

[Darder \(2014:35\)](#) elegantly encapsulates how colonialist mentality, racialised language policies, and cultural hegemony work together to insure that “minorities” are kept firmly pinned under the jackboot of a capitalist society:

*“There is an enduring legacy of cultural hegemony and racialized language policies associated with centuries of colonialism that has resulted in a long history of protracted language struggles around the world. Common practices of the nation-state to blatantly racialize language-minority populations within their own borders persist even today. This has, particularly, been the case when the ruling class of the dominant culture judges such practices to be in the interest of national security or the*



*economic well-being of its citizens. More often than not, the move to obtain cultural and class dominion over a nation's residents has rendered language minority populations problematic to the process of capitalist accumulation. In order to ensure that the "Other" is kept in line with the system of production, racialized institutional policies and practices historically have led to national efforts which have resulted in the push for assimilation, deportation, incarceration, and even the genocide of minority populations."*

## **Chapter Three: Eight examples that help illustrate the bias in twelve prominent and habitually utilised general English language dictionaries.**

### **3.1: Introduction.**

Despite there being widespread biased and exclusive expression in the English language, general language dictionaries do not do an adequate job of alerting users to this usage. Quite the contrary. Anyone accessing these dictionaries is usually only getting a part of the full picture, information that ignores these aspects, or even paraphrases of meaning which promote further biased and exclusive usage.

If this were to be the case, then how could users of these dictionaries, including people ranging from learners of the English language all the way through scholars engaged in high-level research into matters dealing with bias and exclusion, trust these reference works? In this chapter it will be demonstrated through a discerning analysis of how a dozen well-known general English language dictionaries perform from the bias and exclusion perspectives, that they do not properly take care of the task of providing unbiased and inclusive coverage. It will also be shown how they go beyond a bad job and even serve as an insidious tool to indoctrinate learners of the language, and in general to reinforce and/or introduce even more bias and exclusion.

Although theoretical lexicography has largely ignored how larger English dictionaries shape bias in the language, and as a whole there has been relatively limited scholarly research performed in this area, this chapter starts with a brief survey of the literature in this regard, plus a glimpse at a few reference books looking to encourage bias-free usage.

This is then followed by a concise description of the general English dictionaries to be scrutinised, in order to obtain a feel for the user experience each provides. An electronic interface provides many benefits, as will be explored briefly in this chapter, and then in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

Next comes the main part of the chapter, which is the careful examination of these general English dictionaries from the bias and exclusion perspectives, as illustrated through eight example expressions. All analyses will be performed within a sociolinguistic and

sociocultural framework, utilising approaches including critical discourse analysis, critical language awareness/analysis, critical pedagogy, critical race theory, discourse psychology, critical reality awareness, intersectionality, and other methods of examining the role language plays in the fostering, preservation, and furtherance of the established order within a society and culture where there is inequality and injustice.

The paraphrases of meaning and explanations the general English dictionaries provide will also be contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with these expressions. Among the examples there will also be expressions that are not yet present in some or even any of these “regular” dictionaries, to highlight another key manner in which an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary will help identify, describe, and illustrate how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language.

An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature three types of articles, based on lemmas representing three types of expressions, namely:

- 1) Expressions that are biased or exclusive, followed by bias-free and inclusive alternatives, plus explanations which provide insight into the biased and/or exclusive nature of the expression. The examples of these in this chapter are *boys will be boys*, *spinster*, *senior moment*, and *drama queen*.
  - *boys will be boys* serves as a “poster child” for all that is wrong with patriarchy, male hegemony, gender roles, victimisation of females, and the gender binary.
  - *senior moment* is typical of how older people are othered, and how stereotypes of all kinds are used to trivialize and denigrate.
  - *spinster* represents the oppression of women and how they are not allowed to make voluntary decisions in their own lives, as exemplified by the patriarchal heteronormative “marriage ideal.”
  - *drama queen* highlights the oppressive character of patriarchy, heteronormativity, heterosexism, gender roles, and religious dogma.
- 2) Expressions that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. In this chapter these are *rape culture*, *victim blaming*, and *policing of masculinity*.

- ***rape culture*** provides insight into how the oppression of women extends to sexual violence and rape within a patriarchal and capitalistic society where “violence is sexy,” brutality against females is normalised, and the victims are blamed.
- ***victim blaming*** exposes the mechanisms employed to attribute partial or complete blame to everyone from rape victims through the countless people slaughtered by invading armies.
- ***policing of masculinity*** is the observation and regulation of the activities, conduct, and expression of those perceived to be males, in order to ensure compliance with toxic masculine gender-role norms.

3) Articles based on lemmas representing expressions that are neither biased nor exclusive, but that serve to double-check on bias-free and inclusive usage. Users would thus be able to alphabetically look up bias-free and inclusive choices as well. These include ***gender affirmation***, which will wrap up this chapter.

- ***gender affirmation*** exemplifies how despite “everybody” being on patrol monitoring “everyone” else to make sure that they comply with all traditions and norms, that no matter what, a person can nonetheless assert a sense of agency in their own lives.

It is worth noting that the guidelines provided throughout this chapter go beyond helping lexicographers in the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary; they can also serve to enhance the quality, representativeness, and objectivity of general language dictionaries as well. In order for the general English dictionaries to improve in this regard, and for the preparation of lexicons which are dedicated to bias-free and inclusive usage, practical lexicographers might consider redirecting the approach they take when dealing not just with specific expressions, but to add a healthy amount of empathy to their work in general.

Language helps shape our reality, and perhaps even defines it. In this chapter it will be shown that the approach the lexicographers of these general dictionaries have been taking evidences that they need to be clued in to certain aspects of our shared reality. In their indispensable and highly influential work, they are making a lot of decisions for all of us, but not taking into account the needs of many of us. This dissertation, among other things, will hopefully assist existing and future lexicographers to refocus their lens a bit, including bringing the needs of those who are othered and oppressed much more to the forefront.

### 3.2: A quick look at the literature on how larger English dictionaries shape bias in the language, along with a few reference books looking to encourage bias-free usage.

As mentioned, theoretical lexicography and the literature in general have largely ignored how larger English dictionaries shape bias in the language. Here is a brief survey in this regard, plus some comments on a few pertinent books.

[Aarts and McMahon \(2006\)](#) make two key points on bias in English language dictionaries:

- Scholars in the fields of literary, cultural, and historical studies are aware that dictionaries are cultural products, and as such are used as political tools.
- The manifestations of cultural biases in dictionaries include what lemmas appear (and therefore, which are excluded), how the definitions are phrased, the assigned usage labels, and how multiple senses are ordered.

[Arimbi & Kwari \(2016\)](#) emphasize how the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition still promotes gender stereotypes and sexism. [Benson \(2002\)](#) studies the ethnocentrism of English dictionaries from the historical perspective, explaining how these lexicons introduce bias by presenting things through an Anglo-American lens.

[Vejsberg \(2002\)](#) takes aim at the political bias in general English dictionaries, asserting that words and expressions are defined from what he calls a “totalitarian lexicography” viewpoint, which is filled with bias. In doing so, many “wrong” words are banned from dictionaries, while those that do appear are often misrepresented so as to favour totalitarian regimes.

#### 3.2.1: *Speciesism*<sup>80</sup>, another crucial example of bias in the general English dictionaries.

[Heuberger \(2003\)](#) questions the popular belief that dictionaries are impartial and authoritative providers of information, on account of the rampant *speciesism* manifested in the paraphrases of meaning they provide. Unlike most critics of the bias present in English monolingual

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<sup>80</sup> As per the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online*: *speciesism*: The assumption of human superiority leading to the exploitation of animals. Permalink taken on 4 April, 2019: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190404203239/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/speciesism>

dictionaries, Heuberger gives many instances and explanations to better understand the reality of what is going on in these lexicons. He tells us how animals are presented as “renewable resources” for food, labour, experimentation, and clothing. He mentions how language shapes how people think and act, and when users look words up, they get a *biased* view of animals, in which these are defined as existing for the benefit of, and exploitation by, humans. On top of this, animals may be demonised and/or their intrinsic worth trivialised. To cite just a couple of egregious examples:

**Shark**, as cited by [Heuberger \(2003\)](#) from the [COBUILD Dictionary](#) (1998 Edition):

*“A shark is a very large fish. Some sharks have very sharp teeth and may attack people.”*

Fast forward to the present, over 20 years later, as permlinked on 4 April, 2019<sup>81</sup> from the *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*:

*“A shark is a very large fish. Some sharks have very sharp teeth and may attack people<sup>82</sup>.”*

They had over 20 years to improve on this “paraphrase of meaning;” yet not a word was changed. Any user accessing the *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary* would then “know” that *sharks* are huge, scary, and can bite humans with their razor sharp teeth. It *is* vilifying, and it *isn't* saying much on the animal itself, besides the teeth, size, fish, and attack things. There has been no shortage of movies “bottom fishing” with the hackneyed (and incorrect) “murderously violent sharks killing innocent people” trope, and such a paraphrase of meaning would make it appear that the *COBUILD* lexicographers based what they wrote on such films. That, of course, is speculation. What is *not* conjecture is that the users of this dictionary will be fed biased information.

**Wasp**, as cited by [Heuberger \(2003\)](#) from the [Cambridge International Dictionary of English](#)<sup>83</sup> (1996 edition):

*“a black and yellow flying insect which can sting you”*

<sup>81</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190404221651/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/shark>

<sup>82</sup> They also have the sense for *shark* as a swindler, con artist, etc.

<sup>83</sup> This title was replaced by the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.

Moving to the present, over 20 years later, we have this from the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as seen on their website on 4 April, 2019<sup>84</sup>:

*“a flying insect, often black and yellow, that can sting (= produce a small, painful skin injury)”*

They didn't accomplish much over this time, except recognise that wasps don't have to be black and yellow (in reality they can be almost any colour). Besides this, few people might guess from such a paraphrase of meaning that wasps are essential pollinators, that they control other insects that humans label as “pests,” that there are over 30,000 identified species, that they are formidable builders, etc.

*Rhesus*, as cited by [Heuberger \(2003\)](#) from the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1995 Edition):

*“a small monkey common in N India, often used in scientific experiments.”*

Almost a quarter century later, we have, as permalinked on 5 April, 2019<sup>85</sup>:

*“a small S Asian monkey, often used in scientific experiments.”*

They slightly modified where these monkeys frequent, but, the part where “they are squarely located at the *business end*<sup>86</sup> of science” is literally unchanged.

The *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* as seen on 4 April, 2019<sup>87</sup> has this:

***rhesus monkey*** (also ***rhesus macaque***) - A small brown macaque with red skin on the face and rump, native to southern Asia. It is often kept in captivity and is widely used in medical research.

This paraphrase of meaning describes them more precisely, in appearance and in “human uses.” Chapter Two mentions some of the gruesome “medical research” that “scientists”

<sup>84</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190404221537/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/wasp>

<sup>85</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190405201005/https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/rhesus-monkey?q=rhesus+monkey>

<sup>86</sup> In this case, the “nasty” side, similarly to how one can be at the *business end* of a gun (from whence the bullets...)

<sup>87</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190404230755/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rhesus\\_monkey](https://web.archive.org/web/20190404230755/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rhesus_monkey)

such as Harlow, and at the Max Planck institute in Germany, perpetrated on these self-aware, intelligent, and sensitive non-human animals. Harlow designed and deployed an artificial insemination device used in his “research” on rhesus monkeys and “love,” which he named “*rape rack*” ([Linzey and Linzey \(2017\)](#)). In Chapter Two it was also mentioned that “*rape racks*” are utilised to impregnate cows ([Kemmerer, 2013](#)). How much more barbaric and sadistic can it get, than to devise, build, *so name*, and use a “*rape rack*?” In what kind of a society could this occur? In one with a *rape culture*<sup>88</sup>, of course.

This brief *speciesist* medley concludes with *turkey*.

*Turkey*, as cited by [Heuberger \(2003\)](#) from the [Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English](#) (1995 Edition):

*“a bird that looks like a large chicken and is often eaten at Christmas and at Thanksgiving”*

They have had over two decades to update this paraphrase of meaning, which is not just *speciesist*, but also lexicographically extremely lazy, immaturely *ethnocentric*, religiously insensitive, and so on.

So, what does a permalink made on 4 April, 2019<sup>89</sup> show as the paraphrase of meaning?:

*“a bird that looks like a large chicken and is often eaten at Christmas and at Thanksgiving”* (The paraphrase of meaning is identical<sup>90</sup>).

Within Piaget’s<sup>91</sup> theory of *cognitive development*, the *pre-operational stage* is characterised by, among other things:

- The learning of language, and the ability to represent objects by images and words.  
(*Longman* is describing a bird in the paraphrase of meaning).

<sup>88</sup> Please see the *rape culture* example later in this chapter for more on how *rape*, human or otherwise, is an “everyday thing.”

<sup>89</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190404214945/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/turkey>

<sup>90</sup> There is also a second sense: “*the meat from a turkey eaten as food*.” (This may have also been present in the 1995 Edition).

<sup>91</sup> Piaget was a highly influential cognitive psychologist who specialised in the mental growth of children. More here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190405220334/https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/medicine/psychology-and-psychiatry-biographies/jean-piaget>



- Thought is still egocentric, so children have difficulty or are unable to understand that others have their own viewpoint. (*Longman* is assuming that “everyone” is Christian, and that “everybody” “celebrates” “Thanksgiving Day” (if they have even heard of it)).
- Classification of objects by a single feature, an example of which would be: if “object A” is similar to “object B” in one regard, then they must be the same in all regards. (Apparently their identification of birds is based on comparisons with chickens or that “birds are food,” etc.)

As a whole, there is nothing at all here for the ecolinguists to be happy about, nor for anyone else who cares about non-human animals.

### 3.2.2: A few reference books looking to encourage bias-free usage.

Although this Chapter will serve above all to exemplify how a dozen general English dictionaries perform from the inclusion/exclusion perspectives, it is also worth commenting on a few “dictionary-style” reference books that also looked to encourage bias-free usage.

*The Color of Words. An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Ethnic Bias in the United States* ([Herbst, 1997](#)) and *Wimmin Wimps & Wallflowers: An Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Gender and Sexual Orientation Bias in the United States* ([Herbst, 2001](#)), each by the same author, provide reliable information of a decidedly egalitarian nature. Herbst employs an encyclopaedic approach, so each lexicon has only about 1,000 articles. As the titles indicate, these books cover only specific areas of biased usage, but, these books, despite being around two decades old, would make good sources for additional insight into its listed lemmas. Here, as an example, is the article for “*china doll*.” “**China doll.** A Chinese or any East Asian woman viewed as being deferential and existing to serve men. Also, any woman regarded as feminine, small, or delicate. ‘My friend Tina’s was a fascinating house to visit because of her mother, Florida— a small, blonde china doll with a brain like a steel trap’ (Marie Stokes Jemison, in Alexander 1984 46)”. ([Herbst, 2001:51](#)).

*A Dictionary of Bias-Free Usage: A Guide to Nondiscriminatory Language* ([Maggio, 1991](#)) takes an often *prescriptive* approach to the covered expressions, which itself can lead to bias. Besides this, the lexicon essentially ignores key areas such as race, “ethnic” groups, sexuality, and specific needs, among others. On the positive side, it has a couple thousand listed

lemmas and often several alternatives (although some of these suggestions are themselves biased) for each expression. This book provides very little insight into why any given expressions are biased in the first place, but, although that would have been very useful, apparently that was not the aim of the author. Here is the article for “*china doll*.” “**china doll** (referring to a woman) eschew this term; women are not dolls.” ([Maggio, 1991:23](#)).

*Unbiased: Editing in a Diverse Society* ([Wissner-Gross, 1999](#)), as the title implies, is geared towards editors, which are a part of the key “journalism and all related” user group. Similarly to the works by Herbst, this book might serve those seeking to express themselves in a more inclusive manner. Many areas of biased usage are covered, and the explanations provided are very useful. It is not intended to be a dictionary; it is more of a style guide. Here is the article for “*china doll*.” “**China Doll**: Asian women should not be described as *China dolls*. The usage is considered demeaning, nationally based, racist and sexist. *News Watch Project Style Guide* explains that the usage ‘reinforces stereotypes of all Asian women as exotic and submissive sex objects.’ ” ([Wissner-Gross, 1999:88](#)).

Speaking of which, style manuals, such as *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* ([American Psychological Association, 2010](#)), and *The Chicago Manual of Style* ([University of Chicago Press, 2017](#)), each have a few pages with quick “less bias” tips, which are valuable. They don’t cover too much, and they offer pretty much no understanding into how bias in the language and writing works, but that is not their objective. They provide more of a quick fix, as opposed to an *understanding* that would promote inclusive usage in general and not just when “filling in the blanks.”

### 3.3: Twelve Dictionaries.

Why twelve lexicons? As many experienced dictionary users know, it often helps to have multiple wordbooks available, for judicious comparison. Some dictionaries are better with slang, others with technology, there are those that shine in the social sciences, and so on. Astute users have their preferences for all needs, and skilfully juggle several at a time, a process which is greatly enhanced and simplified by accessing them electronically. In addition, the approach each takes may better suit the specific lexicographical needs of specific groups of users. This extends past just “advanced learners” as opposed to “fully fluent,” or “children’s” in contrast to “collegiate,” etc. Beyond that, on occasions expressions appear in some wordbooks but not others. Having these twelve dictionaries also highlights how it is not just

one, a couple, or several, that are not doing a proper job where bias and exclusion are concerned. It's a pervasive thing which needs to be addressed, as will be shown in this chapter.

At this time, happily, there is an excellent selection of lexicons available to anyone with an internet connection and a device to access it. All twelve dictionaries analysed in this chapter are currently “free to all,” as such information should be. On the minus side, at the moment all but one (*American Heritage*) have publicity on their desktop and mobile websites, and plenty of it at that. This extraneous “noise” will distract and diminish the user experience to varying degrees, as the tolerance for such things obviously varies by individual. Most people have become accustomed to living surrounded by marketing of all sorts, so even flashing images, videos that play over and over, and even some with sound are a quotidian thing for them. [Gouws and Tarp \(2017:402-403\)](#) encapsulate this *information overload* from the publicity perspective so:

*“On the one hand, the users get free and easy access to a large number of dictionaries of different types, but on the other hand, these dictionaries are increasingly stuffed with a lot of irrelevant and disturbing material.”*

More about this in Chapters Four and Five.

In this dissertation there is extensive use of *permalinks*, as stored “for eternity” by the Internet Archive “*Wayback Machine*<sup>92</sup>.” The providing of permalinks has several advantages, including:

- Anyone can see what I saw when I performed the analyses, meaning that they can also draw their own conclusions. In addition to the paraphrases of meaning, the entire article may also be seen, complete with its layout.
- The “free to all” status of any of these lexicons may change, so this ensures that those reading this dissertation may indeed see these articles.
- The paraphrases of meaning can, and hopefully will, change in the coming years, so there is a permanently saved snapshot of the current usage, as provided by these dictionaries.
- Regular links can be changed or deleted, meaning that clicking on them may result in an unsuccessful query. This being a dissertation on lexicography, it would be ironic to have a failed search for the expressions here analysed, on account of a dead link or the like. Clicking on a hyperlink and expecting one thing, to get something else or an error message

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<sup>92</sup> The Internet Archive “*Wayback Machine* can be found here: <https://archive.org/web/>

is frustrating. In lexicography, properly addressing users needs starts with them finding what they are looking for.

As it would be naturally expected, the user experience for each of these lexicons, be it for the desktop or mobile versions, will vary over time, so what is here described is representative of what is currently on offer, Spring of 2019.

On the following page, in **Table 3:1**, there is a summary of twenty four items which appear (or not) on the web page when a given lemma is searched, for each of the twelve lexicons analysed in this chapter.

**Table 3:1 - Twelve lexicons and 24 item types related to the *user experience* - (Y = yes, this *is* provided on the article web page for a searched lemma, or N = no, it is *not*):**

<div> <div>Dictionary</div> <div>Items present or not:</div> </div>	O	O	C	M	M	M	A	C	L	R	C	C
	B	N	A	M	B	A	H	h	o	R	A	C
	W	A	L	W	E	E	H	a	n	H	E	E
	E	E						m	g			
part of speech (noun, verb, etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
plural form	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
word forms, other (verb, adjective, etc.)	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
usage labels (offensive, old-fashioned, etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
usage notes	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
etymology (brief)	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
pronunciation (audible)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
pronunciation (audiovisual)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
synonyms/thesaurus related to lemma	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N
thesaurus, one-click access to	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
related words (not necessarily synonyms)	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N
example sentences (from their corpus, web, etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
nearby expressions (lemmas before and after)	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
translations	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
hyperlinked words in the paraphrase of meaning	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
collocations (useful not just for learners)	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
frequency of use over last decades/centuries	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
in-depth essays for selected expressions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
multiple English lexicons (UK, USA, learners, etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
browse entire lexicon by letter, functionality to	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
advertisements and other publicity	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
social media icons (to share)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
language resources & games (blog, quizzes, etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
popular items (word of the day, Sudoku etc.)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Please click on the lexicon names below, to see a permalink for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

OBWE is the [Oxford Living Dictionaries online British and World English Dictionary](#)

ONAE is the [Oxford Living Dictionaries online North American English Dictionary](#)

CAL is the [Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary](#)

MW is the [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

MBE is the [Macmillan Dictionaries online British English Dictionary](#)

MAE is the [Macmillan Dictionaries online American English Dictionary](#)

AH is the [American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language](#)

Cham is the [Chambers Dictionary](#) (NB: Chambers has no specific pages for their articles, so no permalinks possible).

Long is the [Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English](#)

RH is the [Random House Unabridged Dictionary](#)

CAE is the [COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary](#)

CE is the [Collins English Dictionary](#)

Please note that some items may not be present along with all articles. If, for instance, a dictionary regularly features *usage notes* but does not have them in all their articles, it anyway counts as a “yes, they have it.” If a lexicon provides plural forms for irregular plural nouns, such as *theses* for *thesis*, but not for regular plural nouns, then it is also a yes, and so on. And, although the layouts of the desktop versions for each dictionary will be different from their mobile ones (as will be elaborated upon a bit further in this chapter), if any given item type is available through one, it will also be so on the other.

**Table 3:1** facilitates considering item types related to the user experience along the micro, meso, and macro levels:

#### **Micro level:**

Provides an immediate-access summary of 24 item types related to the user experience for all twelve lexicons. Questions such as these can quickly be answered:

- Does the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* provide *example sentences*?
- Does it offer other *word forms* (verb, adjective, etc.)?

#### **Meso level:**

Enables the speedy and simple comparison of all twelve dictionaries with each other as far as these 24 item types are concerned. Questions such as these can quickly be answered:

- How do the *Oxford* and *Macmillan* dictionaries compare in terms of offering example sentences?
- How does the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* compare with the *American Heritage Dictionary* in terms of providing *usage notes* for the listed lemmas?

#### **Macro level:**

Significantly simplifies being able to discern patterns amongst the lexicons as a group. Any number observations and correlations may be made, such as:

- Out of these twelve dictionaries, only the *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary* and the *Collins English Dictionary* offer *videos of pronunciations*.

- The *Chambers Dictionary* does not even offer *audio pronunciations*.

Please also note that in this chapter when two dictionaries from the same publisher such as *Oxford's British & World English* and their *North American English* each provide *identical* treatment to any given expression here studied, the analysis of one naturally applies to the other. So, for the “twelve dictionary recap” for each example, all such cases count for a total of two analyses.

And, please also note that the articles appearing on the *Chambers Dictionary* website do not have their own unique page. This unfortunately means that no links, permanent or otherwise, can be provided for this lexicon. To hopefully see what was seen in the analyses here given, one must go to their webpage (<https://chambers.co.uk>) and enter any desired expression.

### 3.4: The twelve general English language dictionaries to be scrutinised in this chapter.

- *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* provides two English language dictionaries:  
*British and World English Dictionary*  
*North American English Dictionary*
- *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*
- *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*
- *Macmillan Dictionaries online* provides two English language dictionaries:  
*British English*  
*American English*
- *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*
- *Chambers Dictionary*
- *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*
- *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*
- *Collins Dictionaries online* offers two English language dictionaries:  
*COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*  
*Collins English Dictionary*

Of these, four are more focused on British English (all of these are from UK based publishers):

- *Oxford British and World English Dictionary*
- *Macmillan British English Dictionary*
- *Chambers Dictionary*
- *Collins English Dictionary*

Five are more geared towards USA English (two from the UK and three from the USA):

- *Oxford North American English Dictionary* (UK based publisher)
- *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (USA based publisher)
- *Macmillan American English Dictionary* (UK based publisher)
- *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (USA based publisher)
- *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* (USA based publisher)

Three are “advanced learner’s” lexicons (all of these are from UK based publishers):

- *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*
- *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*
- *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*

It is worth noting that each of these dictionaries anyway make distinctions between UK and US usage, and that they are naturally all suitable for anyone using English, including those in the UK, USA, South Africa, Canada, Australia, Jamaica, and so on, and in countries where English is not the primary language, etc. *Oxford* and *Macmillan* also conveniently alert users looking up an expression that is not included in one lexicon, that it appears in the other (unless of course it is not in either). They also provide hyperlinks to their other version for all lemmas. For example, if you look up *spinster* in the *Oxford British and World English Dictionary*, they provide a link to the article in the *Oxford North American English Dictionary*. The articles of the two *Collins* Dictionaries appear on the same webpage, so in the worst case a minimal amount of scrolling gets users where they need to be.

Although Chapter Four will thoroughly examine the users for whom bias-free and inclusive dictionaries would be written, along with how to best fulfil their lexicographical needs, it is worth mentioning the two main groups here:



- Learners and users of English as an additional language, since they need to have reliable lexicographical sources that describe things as they truly are, in order to avoid offending others, committing regrettable errors, fostering misunderstandings, and unwittingly propagating stereotypes and prejudices.
- Those who are proficient in English and who are at reasonably high academic and linguistic levels, and who have adequate dictionary-use skills<sup>93</sup>. Just like learners of the language, they need trustworthy lexicons that enhance their ability to express themselves in a manner that reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others.

### 3.5: Brief descriptions of each dictionary, as provided by each publisher on their respective websites, along with a few comments on the *user experience*, and the like.

#### 3.5.1: *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* provides two English language dictionaries:

*British and World English Dictionary*

*North American English Dictionary*

According to their own website, as permalinked on 10 April, 2019<sup>94</sup>:

*“Oxford Dictionaries focuses on current language and practical usage. The English site provides free access to the largest current English dictionaries and thesaurus as well as helpful tips on grammar, usage, spelling, and more.”*

*“Our dictionaries and other language content are frequently updated, giving you access to the latest new words from fast moving spheres such as popular culture or technology. As well as being free to access, the site is optimized for mobile devices, meaning you can access our quality content wherever you are.”*

This is an accurate description of what they offer. According to [similarweb.com](https://www.similarweb.com), a well-known global website ranking company (among other services), [oxforddictionaries.com](https://www.oxforddictionaries.com) is currently (as of 10 April, 2019) estimated to be the 3,007<sup>th</sup> most popular website globally<sup>95</sup>.

<sup>93</sup> Again, there will be much more detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>94</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190410130002/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/about>

<sup>95</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190410191538/https://www.similarweb.com/website/oxforddictionaries.com>

This permalink is provided to illustrate the popularity. For the rest of the dictionaries only the ranking will be given. Please go to [similarweb.com/](https://www.similarweb.com/) for more on their methodology, etc.

Considering that there are billions of websites around the world, these numbers indicate that this a very popular domain<sup>96</sup>.

As of this writing, the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* “desktop” (as opposed to mobile) has a readily visible search box, and the looked up articles are easy to read. There is plenty of marketing, with banner ads above the desired text, and along the left and right columns of the web page. The advertisements detract from the purpose of the visit to the website but are the price of admission to useful content. [Gouws and Tarp \(2017\)](#) point out that non-lexicographical data, especially in the form of advertisements, can not only unnecessarily drag out the consultation process, but may even lead to a failed search on account of the irrelevant content occupying so much of the visible screen. There will be more on the influence of marketing on the user experience later.

A small, but immediately recognisable loudspeaker symbol next to the lemma alerts users to the possibility of hearing the word properly pronounced, and brief etymologies are given. For most articles there are example sentences, and when applicable, a synonyms page can be accessed with a click or tap. They also have a box for the “expected” “word of the day,” and along the top of the page more *Oxford* content (thesaurus, grammar, blog etc.), symbols of the usual social media (to share), and the possibility to sign in for subscription (paid) content. As you type in the search box, it guesses the next letters (or words in a phrase), which for many people can speed up the search. This also alerts users to similar expressions. Towards the bottom of the page there are editor’s choices for general interest lexicographical and linguistic topics, and more about and from *Oxford*.

The mobile website will vary depending on the device utilised, but on a typical smartphone (at this time, about 6 inches (15.24 cm). height by 3 inches (7.62 cm) width) the search box and the start of the paraphrase of meaning (or the whole thing if short) are available without having to scroll down. More information, such as the rest of the paraphrase of meaning, multiple senses, etymology, and the like, are accessed by scrolling. The format is indeed “mobile friendly,” and all content on the desktop site can also be found on the mobile one. There are many ads, etc., but, happily (at least at this time) most are further below the useful

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<sup>96</sup> A *domain*, or *domain name*, refers to the sequence of characters that identifies a collection of online resources belonging to a given entity. In the case of the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online*, any searches for anything within the domain [oxforddictionaries.com](https://oxforddictionaries.com) counts for the ranking.

content. There may be a banner ad “in the foreground” on the bottom of the screen, meaning that it must be “tapped on the x” to be removed, if desired. In addition, since most smartphones allow queries to be searched by voice, a user might access the browser and say “okay google” (or other search engine recognised) or tap on the microphone symbol and say out loud: “spinster Oxford definition<sup>97</sup>” (or other desired lemma) and get a paraphrase of meaning, amongst other mobile options.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalinks for their respective web pages when *spinster* is searched:

[Oxford Living Dictionaries online British and World English Dictionary](#)

[Oxford Living Dictionaries online North American English Dictionary](#)

### **3.5.2: Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary:**

According to their own website, as permalinked on 10 April, 2019<sup>98</sup>:

*“Cambridge University Press has been publishing dictionaries for learners of English since 1995. Cambridge Dictionaries Online began offering these dictionaries completely free of charge in 1999 — and today, Cambridge Dictionary is still growing.”*

Learners of the language are a key user group for bias-free and inclusive usage dictionaries, and as mentioned, this is one of three advanced learner’s dictionaries included in the chapter. The [dictionary.cambridge.org](http://dictionary.cambridge.org) domain is extremely popular on a global scale, ranking at 690<sup>th</sup> overall according to [similarweb.com](http://similarweb.com)<sup>99</sup>. It should be noted that *Cambridge* offers several English dictionaries and many bilingual ones under the same domain, meaning that the overall rank is that much higher thanks to all of them being together. Nonetheless, based on its ranking, it is perhaps the most popular English learner’s dictionary in the world.

The search box on top is easy to find, and there is a drop-down menu on it to access their other English and bilingual dictionaries. The full article appears below a horizontal banner

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<sup>97</sup> The same method may be used for the other dictionaries, as in saying “spinster *Merriam-Webster* definition,” etc.

<sup>98</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190410173438/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/about.html>

<sup>99</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

ad. The page offers a drop-down menu to access the various dictionary offerings mentioned, has dual loudspeaker symbols for the UK and US pronunciations, respectively, a couple of social media options, some other general interest features such as “new words” and a word game, plus the “ever popular” *word of the day* are there to click on. Similarly to *Oxford, Cambridge* has no shortage of marketing on their website. Besides the mentioned banner ad, the left and right margins also have advertisements. They provide a short etymology, and examples from their corpus and the web. Below the article they provide a series of words with different sizes, which serves as an informal “related ideas and popularity” game. Underneath that, they have a convenient “browse” selection, with the four previous lemmas and next four lemmas above and below the searched expression. As you type in the search box, it guesses the next letters (or words in a phrase), which can speed up the search. In the paraphrases of meaning provided, all but the most common words have hyperlinks, to conveniently access their article with a single click.

The mobile site currently has the search box on top in the same colour as the background, making it hard to pick up. One only sees the magnifying glass symbol, which when clicked on makes it easy to enter a word or phrase. When an expression is searched, the US paraphrase of meaning comes after a horizontal banner ad, then there is a big ad, then comes the UK one<sup>100</sup>. After that, the “frequency thesaurus,” then more ads, then the choice to find a translation. That is a lot of scrolling and wasted time and energy. But, again, the adverts pay for the good content.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalink for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

[Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary](#)

### 3.5.3: Merriam-Webster Dictionary:

According to their own website, as permlinked on 12 April, 2019<sup>101</sup>:

*“For more than 150 years, in print and now online, Merriam-Webster has been America’s leading and most-trusted provider of language information.”*

<sup>100</sup> They know where you are accessing the internet from, so maybe searches from the UK get the UK definition first.

<sup>101</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190412132031/https://www.merriam-webster.com/about-us>

*“Each month, our Web sites offer guidance to more than 40 million visitors. In print, our publications include Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (among the best-selling books in American history) and newly published dictionaries for English-language learners.*

*All Merriam-Webster products and services are backed by the largest team of professional dictionary editors and writers in America, and one of the largest in the world.”*

The three main USA-based lexicons at the moment are this one, the *American Heritage*, and the *Random House* dictionaries. The *Merriam-Webster* is an extremely popular dictionary, coming in at 1,274<sup>th</sup> in the world rankings as per [similarweb.com](https://similarweb.com)<sup>102</sup>. At the moment, they have a comparatively uncluttered website for this group, which makes the website more of a pleasure to use. There is a very large text search area on top, with a horizontal banner ad below it, and easy to read fonts for the entire articles. Then there are ads on the right side, along with “the word of the day.”

There are many useful resources available, including a short etymology, other word forms (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, etc.), each conveniently with their pronunciation, the three lemmas before and after, the option to access their thesaurus, “*Spanish Central*” (with lookup and learning resources such as flash cards), a “kid’s site,” and more. They also have social media sharing possibilities, word games, in-depth word-related articles, and so on. Near the bottom of the page there are essays of interest from their editors, and a selection of word games. They also have a “first known use of the word” feature, which in addition has a comprehensive list of other words first used that same century. They do seem to strive to offer “something for everybody.” They are one of the few lexicons within this group that also allows you to browse the dictionary alphabetically (not just from the search box). Their mobile site is easy to navigate, has just one small banner ad that moves out of sight when swiping down for content, etc. Then more ads below, and mostly the same additional features as the desktop site.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalink for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

[Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

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<sup>102</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

### 3.5.4: *Macmillan Dictionaries online* provides two English language dictionaries:

*British English*

*American English*

According to their own website, as permalinked on 12 April, 2019<sup>103</sup>:

*“The award-winning Macmillan English Dictionary was first published in 2002. Crafted by teams of lexicographers in Great Britain and the United States, it has as its source a corpus, a database containing millions of examples of English as used around the world. Extensive analysis of this corpus of real spoken and written text, using state-of-the-art technology, allowed the dictionary writers to reveal fresh information about how and when words are used.”*

This is a very popular dictionary, coming in at 7,842<sup>nd</sup> in the world rankings as per [similarweb.com](https://www.similarweb.com)<sup>104</sup>. *Macmillan* has a large text search box, below it a horizontal banner ad, and the article, along with other resources such as hyperlinks to access synonyms and the complementing lexicon (so you can switch between the British and “American” English paraphrases of meaning) with a single click. They allow you to choose one or the other as a default. There are no etymologies provided, but there is plenty of general linguistic interest content, including titles of blog entries, open dictionary submissions, and a monthly *BuzzWord* article that explores a lemma in depth. Some articles have examples that double as collocations instances, as many of these lexicons provide. There are more advertisements along the left margin and on the bottom, plus a few social media icons. All other resources, including games, can be selected from a drop-down menu at the top of the page. Their mobile site has the search box close to the top, then a horizontal banner ad, followed by the article. There is an icon that can be tapped to hear the pronunciation, word forms and synonyms are a click away, and after another ad there is the possibility to switch versions (between UK & “American,”) and blog entries. All the other content can be conveniently accessed by tapping first on a menu on the top right of the screen.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalinks for their respective web pages when *spinster* is searched:

<sup>103</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190413182320/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/about.html>

<sup>104</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

[Macmillan Dictionaries online British English Dictionary](#)

[Macmillan Dictionaries online American English Dictionary](#)

### 3.5.5: *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*:

As per their own website, as permailed on 13 April, 2019<sup>105</sup>:

*“A major revision of the Fifth Edition of The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, the premier resource about words for people who seek to know more and find fresh perspectives. This new printing, which marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of the original American Heritage Dictionary, presents the most up-to-date research about the words in our language in an accessible and elegant design, featuring thousands of revisions, including more than 150 new words and senses.”*

Despite a relatively unimpressive 225,411 global rank (for this group, at least) as per [similarweb.com](#)<sup>106</sup> for their own website<sup>107</sup>, this is an enormously popular dictionary which is usually accessed via the [thefreedictionary.com](#) website, which has a premium rank of 1,212<sup>108</sup>.

*American Heritage* is the only truly ad-free member of this group<sup>109</sup>. There are no ads on the main page, none within the articles, and none anywhere else. Towards the top there is the large text search box, and below that the full article, which has a short etymology and other word forms. Along the margins there are several useful text boxes, which include how to use the dictionary, their blog, crossword solver, and more on their usage panel. There is one icon for social media, and no “word of the day.” As a whole they succeed in keeping their web page uncluttered and simple to use. Their mobile site is identical to their desktop site, and flipping or rotating the screen to the landscape view makes for a very enjoyable ad-free experience.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permailed for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

[American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language](#)

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<sup>105</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190413170434/https://www.hmhco.com/shop/books/The-American-Heritage-Dictionary-of-the-English-Language-Fifth-Edition/9781328841698>

<sup>106</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

<sup>107</sup> <https://ahdictionary.com>

<sup>108</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

<sup>109</sup> They have no ads their own ([ahdictionary.com](#)) website; thefreedictionary.com site is cluttered with publicity.



### 3.5.6: *Chambers Dictionary*:

According to their own website, as perma-linked on 12 April, 2019<sup>110</sup>:

*“The 13th edition includes all the much-loved features of The Chambers Dictionary, including the unique quirky definitions for certain words. There are over 1,000 new words and meanings, and there is also a brand new two-colour Word Lover’s Ramble at the back of the Dictionary, showing how English words and definitions have changed over the history of The Chambers Dictionary.”*

Amongst the dictionaries in this group, this is by far the least popular, with a global rank well into the millions as per [similarweb.com](https://www.similarweb.com)<sup>111</sup>. *Chambers* earned its spot on account of having good content, not having any external adverts (they do for other *Chambers* products, though), and its presence helps to round out the examination of the main general English dictionaries. The search box could be much larger, but is still easy enough to find, and users can look for expressions in their main dictionary and thesaurus. Short etymologies are provided, and the website has several “popular” features such as crosswords solvers, and Sudoku number puzzles, mostly available from a drop-down menu at the top.

They offer their own books for sale, and fee-based premium content, but only if you click on the horizontal menu near the top of the page. There was no external content, ads or otherwise, and there were a couple of social media icons. There was no “word of the day.” Similarly to the completely ad-free *American Heritage* website, it was clean and simple to read the articles searched for, without the extraneous noise the ads (usually with animated images and the like) that all others here have. Their mobile site is similarly ad-free, and has a menu for the features, paid materials, etc. Like the *American Heritage* mobile site, the layout is the same as on the desktop version. On the *Chambers* website switching to landscape is almost a must, for a pleasant user experience.

Please note that *Chambers* has no specific pages for their articles, so no permalinks are possible. In order to see an example, please click on the following link, then enter the desired lemma, such as *spinster*:

[Chambers Dictionary](https://www.chambers.co.uk/)

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<sup>110</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190412133207/https://chambers.co.uk/>

<sup>111</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.



### 3.5.7: Longman Dictionary:

According to their own website, as permalinked on 12 April, 2019<sup>112</sup>:

*“The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English – widely known as LDOCE – uses 2000 common words in the definitions to make understanding easy. The 9000 most important words to learn are highlighted with three red circles and the most common meanings of a word are shown first. In addition, 88,000 example sentences are pronounced by British or American native speakers of English.”*

The features they enumerate are all quite useful to learners, and there are several more. The full spoken sentences complement the individual pronunciations electronic dictionaries usually provide, as insight into the rhythm and other ways words orally interact in sentences is also furnished. Their global rank was 10,003 on 10 April, 2019 as per [similarweb.com](http://similarweb.com), which makes it a very popular website. Similarly to all others in this group, except for two, there is no shortage of publicity. The search box is on top, followed by a horizontal banner ad, and the paraphrase of meaning has ads to the left, to the right, and below. They provide a short etymology, examples from their corpus, other word forms, a few related words, pronunciation in both British and “American” English, plus certain words are hyperlinked to get a paraphrase of meaning for them. A drop-down menu by the search text box allows users to also choose amongst their bilingual offerings, and depending on the article there are text boxes with collocations and thesaurus articles. They have a couple of social media icons, the “word of the day,” a “picture of the day,” and like the others, they give you information you want, along with ads you may not want.

The mobile site is very well laid out, and the top of the screen has a nice-sized text search box, and after a small horizontal banner ad, the full article is provided, starting with the paraphrase of meaning, with pronunciation possibilities for both British and “American” English, and example sentences, all of which can also be heard if desired. Then there are collocations, phrases, and examples from their corpus, all in a cognitive-friendly font, and a single banner ad after this content. Then, there are the “word of the day,” “picture of the day,” and “topics to explore.”

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<sup>112</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190412143822/https://www.ldoceonline.com/about.html>

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalink for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

[Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English](#)

### 3.5.8: *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*:

According to their own website, as perma-linked on 13 April, 2019<sup>113</sup>:

*“Dictionary.com is the world’s leading online source for English definitions, synonyms, word origins, audio pronunciations, example sentences, slang phrases, idioms, word games, legal and medical terms, Word of the Day and more. For over 20 years, Dictionary.com has been helping millions of people improve their use of the English language with its free digital services.”*

This is an accurate description of the features they provide, but it is hard to know if they are the “world’s leading online source” for everything they mentioned. Perhaps they are, and their global rank of 1,475, at the very least has them close to the top spot<sup>114</sup>. Where they certainly do have the best is in their domain name: [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com/). The search box is on top, followed by a very large horizontal banner ad underneath it, then the easy to read article, with ads on the right side. They also have the five lemmas before, and five after the lemma, but they are listed one after the other like a sentence, and the searched lemma is not in the middle of this sequence of words, which taken together make this feature almost useless. In addition to a brief etymology, they list the related forms (verb, etc.) in a very readable separate list, each identified one above the other. They mention most of the other useful and popular features in their description, and also have some examples of the use of the lemmas as found on the web, along with other valuable content such as more in-depth looks at given words.

Their mobile version has the search box on top, and the choice to look up through their dictionary or thesaurus. The article appears after a small horizontal banner ad, with the

<sup>113</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190413200255/https://www.dictionary.com/>

<sup>114</sup> As of 10 April, 2019, as per [similarweb.com](https://similarweb.com/).

pronunciation icon alerting users to this helpful feature. Even native speakers may not have heard certain words spoken before, and English is hardly a phonetic language. The article is “interrupted” by a large ad occupying a good part of the screen, so users get a bit, and must scroll down for the rest. They may offer related words, depending on the lemma, their ineffectual string of nearby words, and a short etymology. After more adverts come the related forms, any usage notes a lemma may have, and then examples from the web and other content, such as more in-depth looks at given words.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalink for their web page when *spinster* is searched:

[Random House Unabridged Dictionary](#)

### 3.5.9: Collins Dictionaries online offers two English language dictionaries:

*COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*

*Collins English Dictionary*

As per to their own website, as permalinked on 13 April, 2019<sup>115</sup>:

*“When the first COBUILD dictionary was published in 1987, it revolutionized dictionaries for learners. It was the first of a new generation of dictionaries that were based on real examples of English rather than on compilers’ intuition – the type of English that people speak and write every day.”*

And, as per to their own website, as permalinked on 13 April, 2019<sup>116</sup>:

*“At the cutting edge of language change, Collins free online English dictionary offers you all the latest words and phrases you need at your fingertips. Whether for study, at work, or on the go, you can check spellings, look up meanings and words you need, every day.”*

The global ranking for *Collins Dictionary online* is 3,566, as per [similarweb.com](#)<sup>117</sup>, which makes this quite a popular website. This ranking includes both dictionaries analysed here, plus all the other resources accessed through the [collinsdictionary.com](#) domain, which

<sup>115</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190413174415/http://news.collinselt.com/cobuild-dictionary-online/>

<sup>116</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190413174028/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english>

<sup>117</sup> As of 10 April, 2019.

includes these and other English dictionaries, and several bilingual lexicons. At the top of the page there is a drop-down menu to choose which dictionary is desired (English is default), along with a large search text box. The search results are presented below a horizontal banner ad, along with ads and other content to the left, right, and below as one scrolls. The *COBUILD* article is given first and has no word origins, with the *English Dictionary* below it, which does include a brief etymology. Depending on the searched lemma, the results from other English lexicons they publish may also be provided. There are many lexicographic and linguistic resources on the page, including three lemmas before and after, UK and “American” pronunciations, “automatically selected” example sentences, a graph depicting the relative use of the lemma over the last centuries, and (again, depending on the lemma) translations to a couple dozen languages.

A feature so far unique to *Collins* is the inclusion of a video of the pronunciation for many of the listed lemmas, which is another excellent tool for learners. There is the ability to browse the English Dictionary, and users can do the same for the other lexicons on their website if they click through to them. Plus, there is the “word of the day,” a “word challenge,” marketing for other *Collins* reference works, and more external advertisements. On the top of the screen there is a menu to access other content, such as their blog, and on the bottom to most of their resources, including those aforementioned. The mobile website has the often seen search box, then banner ad, followed by the article format. There is the pronunciation icon, a large ad, and then a video of the pronunciation (if available). The articles for their English lexicons are spaced between ads, as is their other useful content, including that enumerated for their desktop site. At the top is a selection bar which saves all the scrolling if a specific section is desired. For example, users who want to see the translations can go directly there by clicking or tapping “translations.” Finally, on the top left is a drop-down menu for even more, including their blog, and a school section.

In order to see for yourself, please click on the following permalinks for their respective web pages when *spinster* is searched:

[\*COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary\*](#)

[\*Collins English Dictionary\*](#)

Each of these twelve dictionaries, individually and as a group, reflect the English language, culture, and society. The *Oxford* dictionaries provide solid coverage of the current usage from the British & World English and North American perspectives, as do the *Macmillan* lexicons. *Chambers* and *Collins* are a bit more geared towards UK usage, while *Merriam-Webster*, *American Heritage*, and *Random House* do the same for “American” English. To properly round out this group of habitually utilised general English language dictionaries, each from prominent and trusted publishers, we have the “advanced learner’s” lexicons from *Cambridge*, *Longman*, and *COBUILD*.

There will be more on the typological classification of dictionaries later in the dissertation, but, for now it is worth mentioning that the target groups (for instance, advanced learners) for each of these lexicons will help determine how each of these publishers decide what lemmas will appear, the treatment their paraphrases of meaning will be given, and the like.

Through the following eight examples it will be shown how these twelve habitually utilised general English language dictionaries perform individually and as a whole from the bias and exclusion perspectives. It will be demonstrated that factors including the interplay of exclusionary connotations of words and expressions, and the nuances and gradations of biased expression are beyond the scope of even unabridged general English language dictionaries.

This points to the need for a new kind of dictionary: one which would fill in the coverage gaps the regular dictionaries leave where bias-free and inclusive usage are concerned. To date, no dictionaries quite like these have ever been written. Theoretical lexicography has not yet done its part in helping prepare such dictionaries; a deficiency being addressed by this dissertation.

### 3.6: Example One, *boys will be boys*.

The first expression to be analysed in this chapter is *boys will be boys*. This expression is again and again heard, spoken, read, and written. Beyond this, it is so often kept in mind and is so pervasive and entrenched in English-speaking territories, that for many people what *boys will be boys* represents is an integral part not just of their language, but also of their society and culture. *Boys will be boys* might serve, so to speak, as a “poster child” for all that is wrong with patriarchy, male hegemony, gender roles, the victimisation of females, and the gender binary.

The paraphrases of meaning the regular lexicons provide for *boys will be boys* will each be scrutinised, to then be contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with this concept. Before we get to this, however, here is a brief view at what the literature has to say about *boys will be boys*, in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the real-life use of this expression, as opposed to how these well-known general English language dictionaries portray it.

#### **To downplay and trivialise violence against women, including sexual harassment and violence, and rape:**

[Sanday \(2007\)](#) identifies any number of ways in which the *boys will be boys* mentality is utilised to encourage and defend male sexual violence on college campuses, and how it helps rationalise gang rape perpetrated by fraternity brothers. Other societal factors, such as the use of this expression as a mantra to excuse gang rape in middle-class environments, are also employed to analyse this abominable behaviour. [Scales \(2008\)](#) also emphasizes the role played by the “hard-wiring” defence to rape provided by *boys will be boys* in court cases.

[Mansfield, Beck, Fung, Montiel, & Goldman \(2017\)](#) furthermore stress that *boys will be boys* is so often utilised to excuse “subtler” forms of sexual harassment, that it becomes ingrained in people’s minds to the extent that acts of this ilk are considered natural or acceptable. As such, this dissuades victims from saying anything about these incidents, and in cases where an aggrieved person does report about it they are usually told they are being too sensitive.

### To promote policing of masculinity among boys to help insure that *boys will be boys*:

[Reigeluth & Addis \(2016\)](#) looked into how the *boys will be boys mindset* serves as a mechanism to enforce normative behaviour in teenage boys. They observed that there is a pervasive *policing of masculinity*<sup>118</sup>, in which “non-conforming” boys are insulted with misogynistic and homophobic insults, such as “bitch,” “pussy,” and “fag,” among other compliance measures. This leads to most of these teenagers living in fear and anxiety, constantly having to prove themselves to other boys and men. This “gendered social learning system of reinforcement and punishment” ([Reigeluth & Addis \(2016:74\)](#)) promotes and forces *hegemonic masculinity*, with its misogynistic, homophobic, and violent consequences.

### To foster an uncaring, exploitative, and destructive perspective on nature:

[Blenkinsop, Piersol, & Sitka-Sage \(2017\)](#) show in their study within a scholastic setting, how young boys who care about nature are not considered “masculine” enough by some other boys, with the *boys will be boys* type boys getting their point across with violence against nature, in addition to harming nature in order to hurt a caring person. They coin the expression *splash violence* for this latter type of behaviour, similar to the way water can be splashed on others. Such violence is seen as so commonplace by surrounding adults, that they simply regard it as a part of “*boys being boys*.” So, even where nature is concerned, young males must make a choice between being accepted by acting like they don’t care or even harming it, or being rejected if they show empathy or even an interest in nature other than from a destructive or exploitative perspective.

[Wilke \(2014\)](#) sums up various aspects of the *boys will be boys mindset* from the perspective of a responsible parent and of a generally ethical person who has respect and regard for all people. She can do the talking, through these selected passages:

- “Frankly, I’m sick of that phrase, “boys will be boys.” I have a boy, now a man, and I can’t remember a time when that boy’s “being a boy” included slamming another kid’s head to the ground, making repugnant sexual comments about a teammate’s sister...”
- ...“that kind of behavior is not only too often dismissed by that idiotic meme, it’s behavior that appears to be metastasizing in a global culture that continues to move the bar of what’s acceptable.”

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<sup>118</sup> *Policing of masculinity* is also an example expression to be analysed in this chapter.

- ... “when does the toxicity of all this thuggery reach a saturation level that is no longer forgivable, no longer something to brush aside with weary tropes and deflective winks? Now. Right now.”
- “But whatever the gender, the issue of bullies doesn’t seem to rise to a level of concern for enough people. Someone said to me recently, “It’s the way of the world, the way of culture. There will always be bullies, there’s nothing we can do about it.”
- “There is something we can do about it and, like so many other things, it starts in the home. In the early environment where core values are embedded and honorable behavior is both modeled and expected. Children can and must be taught empathy... in fact, **empathy is the antidote to bullying.**” (Emphasis hers).

**Boys will be boys** is given a paraphrase of meaning by all but two of the twelve general English dictionaries being broken down in this chapter. The treatment of this expression in the different dictionaries is presented and discussed in the next sections. Please note that although some of the lexicons here evaluated have example sentences which might help to contextualise a given sense, that the focus in this chapter is on the paraphrases of meaning of the expressions. When a lexicon provides example sentences for any given expression, it is noted, however.

### 3.6.1: The Oxford Living Dictionaries online, as permalinked from their website on 21 February, 2019<sup>119</sup>:

*“Used to express the view that mischievous or childish behaviour is typical of boys or young men and should not cause surprise when it occurs.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** The lemma is identified as a phrase, no usage notes nor other such indications are given, the provided paraphrases of meaning for their *British and World English* and *North American English Dictionaries* are identical, and there are example sentences.

Brief analysis of *Oxford’s paraphrase of meaning*<sup>120</sup>, **with my comments in bold and italic:**

- “*Mischievous or childish behaviour*” **sounds rather harmless, and if the expression were to always be used exclusively for that, then that would be one thing. The reality,**

<sup>119</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225058/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/boys\\_will\\_be\\_boys](https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225058/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/boys_will_be_boys)

<sup>120</sup> *Paraphrase of meaning* was explained in the Introduction to this dissertation.



*however, is that this expression is habitually utilised to “justify” all sorts of atrocious behaviours of males of any age; this latter aspect is not even hinted at.*

- *“Typical and should not cause surprise when it occurs” are meant to convey that:*
  - *it happens a lot*
  - *there is no need to make a “fuss” when it does happen*
  - *boys and young men are “wired” to “inadvertently” cause “harmless” trouble, so there is no point in addressing this conduct in any manner.*
- *One possibly positive aspect of this paraphrase of meaning might have been found in the word view, which could imply that there are those who disagree, but since they did nothing further with this, no insight into any othering or biased usage is offered.*

In all, even though it might not have been meant this way, this paraphrase of meaning unequivocally supports patriarchy, male hegemony, gender roles, the victimisation of females, and the gender binary.

### 3.6.2: The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as seen on their website on 21 February, 2019<sup>121</sup>:

*“said to emphasize that people should not be surprised when boys or men act in a rough or noisy way because this is part of the male character”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** The lemma is identified as a *saying*, and no usage notes nor other such indications are given. *Cambridge* offers example sentences for many articles, which is especially helpful in a learner’s dictionary, but none are provided for this lemma.

Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning, *with my comments in bold and italic*:

- *“Because this is part of the male character” pre-emptively renders all men and boys innocent from any harm done because they are born as males...*
- *“Boys or men act in a rough or noisy way” ...owing to the fact that “that is the way the male gender is.”*
- *“People should not be surprised” is there to be sure that no one makes a big deal out of whatever happens, since it is anyway what is expected from boys and men.*

<sup>121</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225327/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/boys-will-be-boys>

- *“emphasize” is added to be extra certain that there will be no misunderstandings: boys and men are that way, whether anyone likes it or not. “Boys or men” acting in a rough or noisy way may also imply that “girls and women” do not, since this is “part of the male character.”*

As already seen with the *Oxford* usage, this paraphrase of meaning supports the stereotyping of each sex with an emphasis on gender double standards, in addition to the maintenance and promotion of the *patriarchal society*. There is nothing at all in this paraphrase of meaning which would alert the user to what may lay behind the seemingly innocuous saying. As patriarchal as the *Oxford* paraphrase of meaning is, the *Cambridge* version manages to outdo it.

### 3.6.3: The online version of the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, as permalinked from their website on 21 February, 2019<sup>122</sup>:

*“used to indicate that it is not surprising or unusual when men or boys behave in energetic, rough, or improper ways”*

*“You shouldn’t be too hard on them for staying out so late. Boys will be boys.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** The lemma is identified as an idiom, no usage notes nor other such indications are given, and an example is included along with their paraphrase of meaning. *Merriam-Webster* offers example sentences for many articles, but no additional ones are provided for this lemma.

#### **Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

- *“Not surprising or unusual” informs that “that’s the way things are,” so there is no need to even take notice.*
- *Their qualifying of the expression goes from:*
  - *“behave in energetic” (neutral)*
  - *“rough” (questionable)*
  - *“or improper” (deleterious) “ways,” suggesting that anything should be tolerated.*

The provided example is also a typical *boys will be boys* representation, where two components are usually present: 1) it is something relatively minor, and 2) you should not do much, or preferably nothing about it.

<sup>122</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225527/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/boys%20will%20be%20boys>

As with the other lexicons, although a dictionary user would have scarcely a clue as to what lays behind the concept of *boys will be boys*, to *Merriam-Webster's* credit they did include the words *rough* and *improper*. As in the previous paraphrases of meaning, theirs promotes standardised conceptions, and therefore expectations, of each gender.

#### 3.6.4: The online *Macmillan Dictionary*<sup>123</sup>:

*“used for saying that some types of behaviour are typical of boys and men, and that they will never change”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** The lemma is identified as a *phrase*, no usage notes nor other such indications are given, and their British English and “American” English paraphrases of meaning are identical. *Macmillan* does not provide example sentences.

#### Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

- *“Used for saying that some types of behaviour are typical of boys and men ” **again informs the reader that this “non-specified” (therefore “whatever”) conduct is to be expected.***
- *“they will never change ” **firmly establishes the finality and permanence of this, which again implies that nothing can or will be done to change this.***

Once again, the paraphrase of meaning does nothing to inform the users about male/female categorisation and bias, and how even from a young age males get to do what they want; period.

#### 3.6.5: The *Chambers Dictionary*<sup>124</sup>:

*“said especially when referring to childish or foolish behaviour in men rather than in boys: boys cannot help behaving like boys, it is in their nature (so one must expect and put up with it).”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** No usage notes nor other such indications are given. *Chambers* does not provide example sentences.

<sup>123</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222000311/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/boys-will-be-boys>

<sup>124</sup> As mentioned, no permalinks (nor regular ones) may be made from the Chamber site.

**Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

- “said especially when referring to childish or foolish behaviour in men rather than in boys” *This explanation starts with the “innocent” (childish or foolish) behaviour of men.*
- “boys cannot help behaving like boys, it is in their nature” *They then just switch to saying something about boys. Yet again, the “biological” explanation for any and all behaviour means that no matter what, “the boys are innocent.”*
- “(so one must expect and put up with it).” *They “wrap it up” with the stale message that since you have been warned it is coming, to just keep your trap shut<sup>125</sup> when it happens.*

**3.6.6: The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English<sup>126</sup>:**

*“used to say that you should not be surprised when boys or men behave badly, are noisy etc.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** No usage notes nor other such indications are given. There are example sentences.

**Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

The message, yet again, is that we should expect males to do whatever they want. This is the *patriarchal* and *orthodox* way of seeing “the two genders<sup>127</sup>, as per the *gender binary*.

**3.6.7: HarperCollins****3.6.7.1: The COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary<sup>128</sup>:**

*“If you say boys will be boys, for example when a group of men are behaving noisily or aggressively, you are suggesting in a light-hearted way that this is typical male behaviour and will never change.”*

<sup>125</sup> The mouth can be referred to as “the trap,” and in this instance “keep your trap shut” is a rude way of saying to not say anything.

<sup>126</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230001/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/boys-will-be-boys>

<sup>127</sup> As far as *patriarchy* is concerned, there are two, and only two, clearly defined genders.

<sup>128</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230513/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/boys-will-be-boys>

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a phrase, no usage notes nor other such indications are provided, and there are no example sentences.

**Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

- “group of men are behaving noisily or aggressively” *already sets an “anything goes” stage.*
- “light-hearted way” *There are many established orders, one of which is that set by masculine hegemony. Since such things “must not be questioned,” any possible commentary must be made in an amusing or otherwise non-threatening manner.*
- *And even then, it may only be indirectly stated, as seen by their need to add “suggesting.”*
- “typical male behaviour” *clearly indicates that this is the way males are. By implication, any such behaviour by females might therefore be regarded as “deviant,” which further promotes the gender binary and gender double standards.*
- *Finally, in case there was any doubt that the established order will continue to reign supreme, “will never change” sets the record straight: male behaviour is not to be constrained, now or ever<sup>129</sup>.*

*HarperCollins*, the publisher of this dictionary, is making sure that any learners of the English language who read this paraphrase of meaning will understand, unequivocally, that males can do whatever they want, whenever they want, and that there is and never will be any point in questioning anything. As uninspired and uninspiring as the other paraphrases of meaning are from the exclusion and bias perspectives, they pale in comparison with the *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*.

### 3.6.7.2: The *Collins English Dictionary*<sup>130</sup>:

*“youthful indiscretion or exuberance must be expected and tolerated”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** no usage notes nor other such indications are provided, and there are no example sentences.

<sup>129</sup> Even if this means raping, pimping, murdering, plundering, dehumanising, objectifying, othering, etc., as seen in Chapter Two.

<sup>130</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230513/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/boys-will-be-boys>

### Brief analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

Since they used “youthful,” which can refer to “either” gender, that aspect is not biased, but the paraphrase of meaning nonetheless has very little to do with what **boys will be boys** means. It just seems like they threw in a related expression. This expression does, however, connote the usual a) you can expect it, and b) don’t bother doing anything about it.

At the time of these analyses, the online versions of the following dictionaries did not have an article for “**boys will be boys**.”

American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language  
Random House Unabridged Dictionary

### 3.6.8: Recap of the dictionaries with a lemma listed for **boys will be boys**.

Of the twelve possible dictionaries in this analysis that could have been evaluated for this expression, since two did not have a paraphrase of meaning for **boys will be boys**, there was a total of ten analyses. Both *Oxford* paraphrases of meaning warn users that this behaviour “*should not cause surprise*,” the *Cambridge* paraphrase of meaning had “*should not be surprised*,” *Merriam-Webster* has “*it is not surprising*,” and *Longman* has “*should not be surprised*.” That’s a “surprising” 50% of the dictionaries. In addition, words like *typical* and *expected* were employed, leading to all dictionaries telling its users that that is the way it is, so there is no need to be astounded or anything like that when any such conduct is afoot. That is, **boys will be boys** is a part of the *established order*, and must **not** be questioned. Males are “wired” to be this way, so any “childish,” “rough,” “noisy,” “energetic,” “improper,” “foolish,” “aggressive,” “bad,” “indiscreet,” or “exuberant” manifestations are perfectly “normal” and must be expected and therefore tolerated. From these paraphrases of meaning it seems to be clear that it has been that way, continues to be that way, and will always be that way.

While a couple of paraphrases of meaning had words like “aggressive” or “rough,” none of them even hinted at the rape, oppression, violence, typecasting, gendering, etc. that the **boys will be boys mindset** embodies in real life. So, as a group, these dictionaries did an inadequate job on **boys will be boys**, since they are saying one thing, while reality is proving another. The cited literature backs this up.

### 3.6.9: Contrasting these paraphrases of meaning with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with this expression.

**boys will be boys** – An expression indicating that rowdy behaviour is not just characteristic of boys (and often men), but is to be expected and tolerated, since males are “wired” to be “rambunctious.” This stereotype serves to reinforce male hegemony, gender roles, the victimisation of females, and the gender binary. This mindset promotes harmful behaviour in boys and males of any age, while girls and females in general are encouraged (likelier forced) to be subservient and willing to be victimised. As such, it unequivocally nurtures and promotes the patriarchal society, along with sharply defined gender double standards. This expression has been employed countless times to mitigate and trivialise actions ranging from horseplay through gang rape. There is no corresponding expression for females. *Girls will be girls* would likely evoke clichéd images related to shopping, gossiping, dressing up or talking about fashion, parading around the beach or pool in bikinis, giving each other makeovers, giggling in a bar, mall, or other setting where males are on the prowl, etc.

Although in Chapter Five there will be a full explanation, including diagrams, of the suggested microstructure for the articles in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, here are several aspects, including where users can expect to find what. There will be three types of articles, based on lemmas representing three types of expressions, so this explanation focuses specifically on the structure for this example, which is a biased and exclusive expression.

- As shown here, the lemma appears with a *sans-serif* typeface<sup>131</sup> (here Helvetica/Arial in **bold**), which after a dividing hyphen is followed by a *serif* typeface<sup>132</sup> (here the one utilised is non-bold, non-italic Roman/TimesRoman/TimesNewRoman) for the paraphrase of meaning.
- Both of these typefaces are commonly used, immediately recognised, easy to ready, and readily distinguished from each other. Any expenditure of cognitive energy is minimised with these selections.

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<sup>131</sup> More here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190422131321/https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/50800/sans-serif>

<sup>132</sup> More here:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190422131124/https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/51149/serif>

- After the lemma, which will be found by entering it in the search box, via a lexicon browse function, a web search (etc.), or alphabetically if in a printed or e-book, the article will have up to seven main components<sup>133</sup>, depending on the type of article. These are:
  - non-biased and inclusive alternatives (if applicable)
  - a paraphrase of meaning
  - other deprecated expressions to avoid (if applicable)
  - an explanation of where the bias and/or exclusion is present
  - illustration and/or further commentary
  - also called (if applicable)
  - additional senses (if applicable)
  - any bias-free and inclusive alternatives will be presented *italicised* in the serif typeface, to highlight that they are not a part of the paraphrases of meaning, explanations, or illustrations, but that they do need to be noted (if applicable)

### 3.6.10: *Boys will be boys* conclusions:

As a whole, the paraphrases of meaning seen in the general English dictionaries have several recurring messages:

- Boys or men behave any way they want to, including being rough and improper.
- Such conduct is biologically programmed and should therefore be expected.
- Boys and men will never change this “harmless” behaviour.
- There is no point in trying to change this, nor even addressing it at all.

And by possible implication, this could mean that:

- All behaviour of girls and women must be controlled, be it by themselves or others.
- There is no point in trying to change this, nor even addressing it at all.

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<sup>133</sup> Again, this will all be explained in detail in Chapter Five.



As we have seen, there is plenty of room for improvement among the general language and learning English dictionaries from the “biased usage” perspective.

Only the suggested paraphrase of meaning provided by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they truly are, the way a dictionary is supposed to.

In a nutshell: the expression *boys will be boys* can refer to behaviour and perspectives that can be quite harmful, oppressive, destructive, and violent, and these general and learning dictionaries are saying one thing, while the scholarly literature, and real life, prove another.

### 3.7: Example Two, *senior moment*.

To make reference to just one clichéd conception associated with older persons in general, we next examine the expression *senior moment*. Despite this noun phrase having been first used less than 25 years ago according to the etymologies provided by the *Random House Unabridged* and *Merriam-Webster Dictionaries*<sup>134</sup>, it anyway appears in eleven of the twelve dictionaries here assessed.

#### 3.7.1: A brief view at what the literature has to say about this expression.

Here is a brief view at what the literature has to say about *senior moment*, demonstrating how this expression is used in real life, as opposed to what the regular dictionaries are portraying. These examples highlight the need for inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, in order to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the true use and attendant consequences of this expression.

[Bonnesen and Burgess \(2004\)](#) go into great detail on *senior moment*, basing an entire scholarly article on the use of this ageist concept, concluding that the increasing popularity of this expression is indicative that such stereotypes remain as a socially acceptable norm. Here are some highlights:

- They state that *senior moment* is just one out of many negative stereotypes related to ageing.
- They point out that the first appearance in a newspaper they could find was in 1997, and that its use increased exponentially over the next three years, which was indicative of its acceptance by the [US] American culture.
- They underscore the important role the media plays in the propagation of such negative attitudes. The media reflects social attitudes, and the media shapes them<sup>135</sup>.

[Bai \(2014\)](#) explains how younger people tend to negatively stereotype older people, and on the detrimental effects that these demeaning prejudices have on the latter's mental and physical well-being, along with perhaps impairing their social functioning. By being persistently exposed to ageist stereotypes, members of the targeted group are likelier to internalise these false preconceptions, which can then lead to a deteriorated self-perception.

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<sup>134</sup> These permalinks are given in their respective analyses, later in this example.

<sup>135</sup> As amply demonstrated in Chapter Two of this dissertation, through the movie and media portrayal of Hispanic Peoples.

[Katopol \(2016\)](#) tells about how such stereotypes adversely affect the in-library experience of older patrons. She states that our society has so many negative stereotypes associated with older individuals, that people barely realise that they are spreading them through what they say and do. An important message here is that people recurrently judge others based on misconceptions, and simply propagate these incorrect notions pretty much unconsciously. That is an insidious manner in which bias and exclusion work, and a part of how effective they are in *othering*.

[Katopol \(2016\)](#) also declares that the threat of being stereotyped, and the fear of conforming to said preconceived ideas affects not just older patrons, but also other groups. For instance, black doctoral students may be concerned that their merely asking a librarian questions could result in their being judged as unqualified for doctoral work, or even for university studies in general. Same goes for women asking maths questions, since “women can’t do math,” and so on. Another vital message here is that any stereotyping promotes more stereotyping. In the case of “forgetful seniors,” older patrons are concerned that if they ask to have something written down, or need an explanation repeated, that they will be “proving” that they indeed have impaired mental ability. This is all very ironic, since libraries are supposed to be a place where anyone and everyone should be able to acquire new knowledge in a safe and nurturing environment.

[Barber \(2017\)](#) quotes some ageism statistics, stating that:

- “84% of older Americans and 91% of older Canadians reported having experienced at least one incident of overt ageism<sup>136</sup>, and over half of respondents reported experiencing multiple incidents.”
- “The European Social Survey found that ageism was the most commonly experienced form of prejudice within their sample.”

It could be reasonably surmised that the actual numbers are even higher, on account of a) some targets of ageism not realising they were being victimised by overt acts of discrimination, and b) a given proportion of respondents would not acknowledge such incidences on account of being embarrassed, for fear of further abuse, and so on<sup>137</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> For instance, to be insulted or ignored.

<sup>137</sup> Please see the *victim blaming* example for further insight into how these phenomena work, and the indispensable role language plays.

[Barber \(2017\)](#) also points out that some ageist stereotypes may also be positive (such as being good-natured or warm), which when combined by the “overall perception” that older people are lower in mental competence, produce a pitying stereotype in which older people are then patronised. In this manner, they may be thought of as lovable but “not quite there,” which can be quite demeaning to many who are more than sufficiently competent.

[Barber \(2017\)](#) goes on to make another significant point; if a younger person has a mental lapse, it is assumed that it was a fleeting thing, such as being in a hurry. If an older person were to have a similar mental slip, however, then it is a *senior moment*, which is understood to be of a more recurrent nature.

[Griffiths, Thinnes, and Byers-Connon \(2017\)](#) tell us how certain false beliefs and myths regarding older people can negatively affect how they are treated by those who work with them. Manifestations of this ageism may include incorrect assumptions regarding their mental and physical abilities, and such rigid preconceptions do not help matters. The negative stereotyping that older people are subjected to may promote them to also believe such nonsense, which can deteriorate their self-image and enjoyment of life in general.

They also point out that use of the expression *senior moment* encourages people to believe that older people have frequent memory lapses. The authors cite an example of an older man who was brusquely explained a new and complicated procedure to obtain health benefits. When this person asked for further explanations, the impatient younger person just repeated himself loudly, and when the older person moved on, the younger one muttered “these senile old guys.” Perhaps if there wasn’t such a prevalence of linguistically-based dividers of peoples, the younger man may have had a little more empathy.

In “*Believing what you hear: The impact of aging stereotypes upon the old*,” ([Bennett and Gaines, 2010](#)) there is a journal article whose title says it like it is for all stereotypes, not just those that are ageist. The authors explain how the expression *senior moment* not only impacts older people, but also younger people “on the way there:”

- the younger people hear it and use it
- they adopt negative stereotypes pertaining to older people, including that they themselves may eventually have memory problems
- they then perceive these problems as inevitable

- when they later have a momentary lapse, the prophecy is already considered on its way to becoming fulfilled
- they then believe themselves to be on track to mental incompetence and finally dementia

This cycle is kept going by the continued “mindless” use of this expression. So, in excluding others with this ageist expression, those being “witty and clever” are perhaps also harming themselves. The following is a look at how these twelve general English dictionaries only make matters worse.

### 3.7.2: The *Oxford Living Dictionaries* online as seen on their website on 22 February 2019<sup>138</sup>:

*“A temporary mental lapse (humorously attributed to the gradual loss of one’s mental faculties as one grows older)”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, it is indicated that it is used informally, the provided paraphrases of meaning for their *British and World English* and *North American English Dictionaries* are identical, and there are example sentences.

**Analysis of this paraphrase of meaning, with my comments in bold and italic:**

- “A temporary mental lapse” ***If they had left it at that, then the only bias would have been found in the lemma itself, for which Oxford naturally could not be at fault, since they were including a commonly-heard expression.***
- “(humorously attributed to the gradual loss of one’s mental faculties as one grows older)” ***But, they had to append the additional remark, which regardless of the parentheses is where the bias lies. It is usually “humorous” to those saying this, and can even be so for some “recipients,” but, as a group older people are nonetheless othered, through the reinforcement of the incorrect belief that older people in general lose their mental faculties.***

In all, this paraphrase of meaning supports hackneyed images of mentally-deteriorating older people, and the inclusion of “humorous” makes it sound like the use of this expression is just “harmless fun.” There is nothing amusing, especially to any targets, about spreading

<sup>138</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190222095628/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/senior\\_moment](https://web.archive.org/web/20190222095628/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/senior_moment)

stereotypes. Even when the expression is utilised “innocently,” the linguistic othering is there.

### 3.7.3: The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary<sup>139</sup>:

*“an occasion when someone forgets something in a way that is thought to be typical of older people:”*

*“Is this just a senior moment or am I losing my memory?”*

*“I always write important names down, in case I **have** a senior moment.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a countable noun, it is labelled as used informally, and there are no example sentences other than the two included with the paraphrase of meaning. The word “have” in the second sentence was bolded in the original text.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning and the two included sentences:**

Cambridge could have had a much less biased treatment of the expression if they had slightly altered their paraphrase of meaning to be:

*“an occasion when someone forgets something in a way that is thought to be stereotypical of older people”*

Replacing *typical* with *stereotypical* would say it like it is, since this *is* a stereotype, and a demeaning one at that. The examples they include with the paraphrase of meaning unequivocally hammer in the “elderly and therefore forgetful” clichéd image of older people.

### 3.7.4: The online version of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary<sup>140</sup>:

*“an instance of momentary forgetfulness or confusion that is attributed to the aging process”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and there are example sentences.

<sup>139</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222095745/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/senior-moment>

<sup>140</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222095841/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/senior%20moment>

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

As in the previous paraphrases of meaning, *Merriam-Webster* promotes standardised preconceptions, and therefore expectations, of what older people can look forward to. The reference to the “aging process” gives their explanation a scientific, matter-of-fact certainty to what’s coming. But it still is fallacious.

**3.7.5: The online version of the *Macmillan Dictionary*<sup>141</sup>:**

*“an occasion when someone forgets something”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a countable noun, and is labelled as being used informally. The paraphrases of meaning for their *British English* and *American English* lexicons are identical. *Macmillan* does not provide example sentences.

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

The paraphrase of meaning itself is free of bias, but, they do nothing to discredit the association of the expression with this unflattering myth. The fact that they paraphrase the meaning of this expression in this manner equates forgetting with being old, so in the end what they offer is pretty much as biased as what the other dictionaries do.

**3.7.6: The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*<sup>142</sup>:**

*“An instance in which one is unable to remember something or to focus adequately on the matter at hand, viewed as typical of aging.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and it is indicated that it is used informally. *American Heritage* does not provide example sentences.

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

- *“An instance in which one is unable to remember something or to focus adequately on the matter at hand” They got off to a good, non-biased start.*

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<sup>141</sup>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190222095927/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/senior-moment>

<sup>142</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190420093721/https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=senior+moment>

- “viewed as typical of aging.” *But then they bungle it with the conventionalised correlation of older age and diminished mental ability.*

Nothing new here.

### 3.7.7: The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English<sup>143</sup>:

*“a time when you cannot remember something, because you are getting older – used humorously”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and there is an example sentence. The “used humorously” label is incorporated into the paraphrase of meaning.

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

The message, yet again, is that there is a direct correlation with getting older and becoming more forgetful. Adding “used humorously” renders the incorrect oversimplification all the more pathetic.

### 3.7.8: The Random House Unabridged Dictionary<sup>144</sup>:

*“a brief lapse in memory or a moment of confusion, especially in an older person.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and labelled as “often facetious.” There are no example sentences, but there is a relevant “related content” slideshow essay.

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

As seen in the *Oxford* and *American Heritage* treatment, they start out unbiased, but then reinforce the stereotype with the further “clarification,” especially in the light of the searched lemma that led to the explanation. The “related content” slideshow is suitably titled “*Senior Idioms That Need Early Retirement*,” and features ten idioms<sup>145</sup>.

<sup>143</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222100036/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/senior-moment>

<sup>144</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222100708/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/senior-moment?s=t>

<sup>145</sup> [Please click on this text to see a permalink of this slideshow.](#)



### 3.7.9: The *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*<sup>146</sup>:

*“If an elderly person forgets something or makes a mistake and you refer to this as a senior moment, you mean that the person forgot the thing or made the mistake because they are old and their mental abilities are declining.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and it is indicated that it is “used informally (mainly in the US).” There is one example sentence.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

With such a paraphrase of meaning, *COBUILD* is doing more than its fair share of making sure that the “old and forgetful” stereotype will live on and on.

- *“because they are old and their mental abilities are declining” almost conveys a “becoming worthless garbage” message.*
- *the inclusion of “elderly” unnecessarily hints at frailty.*

Learners of the English language, the main target audience of this dictionary, would likely promote this stereotype, unwittingly, after looking up this expression. *COBUILD* is making sure that any learners of the English language, advanced or otherwise, who read this article will get and “remember” the message.

### 3.7.10: The *Collins English Dictionary*<sup>147</sup>:

*“a lapse of memory common in elderly people”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, that it is used humorously, and there is one example sentence.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Yet again, the message is that older people are forgetful, and that this is a common phenomenon at that, is transmitted. And, just like the *COBUILD Advanced English*

<sup>146</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222100831/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/senior-moment>

<sup>147</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222100831/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/senior-moment>

*Dictionary*, also from HarperCollins, the gratuitous inclusion of *elderly* superfluously hints at frailty. Besides this, just because something is used “humorously,” does not mean it can’t exclude or do harm. How many older people are forced to “laugh along” with what to many would be painful? To name another common example, how many males make lewd remarks “in jest” or tell obscene jokes in the presence of females who are not finding what is said to be funny in the least?

As of the time of this analysis, the online version of the following dictionary did not have an article for *senior moment*: the *Chambers Dictionary*.

### 3.7.11: Twelve dictionary roundup for *senior moment*, conclusions, and an inclusive and bias-free paraphrase of meaning.

Of the twelve dictionaries that could have been evaluated here for this expression, since one did not have a paraphrase of meaning for *senior moment*, we had a total of eleven analyses.

Here is a breakdown from the “can’t recall” perspective:

- Four of the eleven paraphrases of meaning incorporate the word *forgets* in their description
- Another has *forgetfulness*
- One has *unable to remember*
- Another has *cannot remember*
- Two refer to a *lapse in/of memory*
- And two refer to a *mental lapse*

So, 100% of the paraphrases of meaning made the fallacious “unable to remember” connection.

As a whole, the paraphrases of meaning seen in these general English dictionaries convey the following recurring message: older age equates to deteriorated mental capacities. By implication, this means that only younger people can remember things, stay focused, and otherwise use their brain “properly.”

These paraphrases of meaning can be contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with this expression:

**senior moment** – *momentary lapse, momentary confusion*. Anyone can forget something or become disoriented for a brief time, not just an older person. Besides that, obviously, not all older people are forgetful, easily confused, or inattentive. This expression only serves to propagate an unflattering and incorrect stereotype.

Although Chapters Four and Five will deal with *users* of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries and the *microstructure* of the articles (among several other topics) respectively, it is worth mentioning the following regarding this example:

- From the *user's perspective*: when looking up a lemma such as **senior moment** in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, a user may already suspect that this is a biased expression, and may only want bias-free alternatives at that moment. So, for them, the inclusive choices are provided immediately. No need to read through, or even scan the article. They can do that if they want to, of course, and the paraphrase of meaning will be there for them when they need that additional insight.
- From the *article structure perspective*: this is a very straightforward concept whose paraphrase of meaning required less than 50 words to get the full message across, including the inclusive choices. Such a short article would be suitable even for a “regular” English dictionary.

Why must older equate to forgetfulness or having impaired brain function? It mustn't, of course, but with ageist expressions such as **senior moment**, it would appear to be so.

One example of the *othering* this expression encourages is the manner in which, “we younger people” can remember and have “*normal* use of our mind,” while “*they* older people” cannot. Not a single one of these highly trusted dictionaries pointed out the bias or exclusion that is embedded in this “humorous<sup>148</sup>” (and therefore “harmless<sup>149</sup>”) expression. If these lexicons added a label such as “*use is insensitive*,” it would help a lot.

The linguistic *othering* is nevertheless still there when **senior moment**, or most any other stereotype for that matter, is mentioned “innocently.” And each time it is said, equates to that

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<sup>148</sup> To those using the term.

<sup>149</sup> Again, mostly only to those using the term.

many more times that it is heard. A broadcast on the boob tube, for instance, may be viewed by millions of people. The way people are perceived affects how they are treated, and stereotypes set the stage for shoddier treatment. All stereotypes, like all inaccurate judgments, *other*, and it has been shown here that the use of **senior moment** does this as well.

[Steele and Aronson \(1995:797\)](#) offer the following paraphrase of meaning:

“**stereotype threat** - *is being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group.*”

Such *stereotype threats* can seriously diminish the quality of life of the targeted group. In this manner the harm is being done at all times, not just when someone says or hears **senior moment**. It is a part of our society and culture, and the solution to stop the *othering* this expression promotes is to simply stop using the expression. A necessary part of this process is to identify the bias and exclusion entrenched in this expression, something none of the regular English dictionaries managed to do. They are saying one thing, while the scholarly literature and real life are proving another.

As mentioned, an additional item included along with the *Random House senior moment* article was a “related content” slideshow, suitably titled “*Senior Idioms That Need Early Retirement.*” In it, ten idioms, including “*having a senior moment*” and “*over the hill,*” help bring attention to several ridiculous clichés associated with becoming older. The *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* labels **over the hill** as “often humorous,” and has the following paraphrase of meaning<sup>150</sup>:

“*used for describing someone who is old and no longer useful or attractive.*”

*Old, useless, and ugly.* Not terribly amusing. Similar to the manner in which any and all bias in the general English language dictionaries is: *traditional, irrelevant, and othering*. Only the suggested paraphrase of meaning provided by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they are in the real world, the way a dictionary should do. And, beyond that, it also provided inclusive alternatives to help reduce bias and exclusion in the language, and therefore in the culture and society.

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<sup>150</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190420150647/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/over-the-hill>

### 3.8: Example Three, *spinster*.

In *senior moment* we saw one of the ways ageism *others* older people. *Spinster* is another, but with a much more pervasive *patriarchal* twist. [Lahad \(2017:52\)](#) states:

*“it is my contention that single women above a certain age are faced with a triple discrimination, based on their age, gender, and single status.”*

It follows, then, that if a woman were to be black (or otherwise “not white”) then it would be a quadruple discrimination. It could be a quintuple discrimination if she were also to be a “foreigner,” and so on.

As will be seen by the closer examination of the word *spinster*, the *patriarchal heteronormative*<sup>151</sup> “marriage ideal” is not only increasingly onerous for unattached women as they age, but can even serve to burden unmarried females their entire lives.

[Ingraham and Saunders \(2016:1\)](#) share this on the *heterosexual imaginary*:

*“can be defined as the ways of thinking that conceal how heterosexuality structures gender and closes off any critical analysis of heterosexuality as an institution.”*

This makes being heterosexual “automatic,” “normal,” a part of “their God’s plan” and the *established order*, none of which should ever be questioned or even given another thought. Most people also believe, uncritically, that females are born to get married and to have and raise children. It’s as simple and natural as breathing is for almost everybody: “the air is there and we take it so that we can live.”

Even if a woman *does* conform to the *patriarchal* expectation (and therefore *requirement*) of getting married in order to *avoid* being a *spinster* or an *old maid*, she can nevertheless look forward to linguistic subjugation.

To name just one example, a wife is often referred to “humorously” as the *old ball and chain*, as if it were *they* who negate freedom. “Jocular” or not, the message is there. Another

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<sup>151</sup> The *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* provides this paraphrase of meaning for *heteronormative*: “Denoting or relating to a world view that promotes heterosexuality as the normal or preferred sexual orientation.”

Permalink:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190621162845/https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/heteronormative>

oppressive aspect of this expression is that if a wife questions anything at all, reasonable as it may be to do so, that she runs the risk of being labelled<sup>152</sup> as a *shrew*, *vixen*, *henpecker*, *fishwife*, *hellcat*, *dragon*, *gorgon*, or *she-devil*, among many others. Not strangely, in a *patriarchal* society there is a dearth of analogous expressions for males, which is particularly ironic since it is they who usually deny liberty.

The first example sentence the *Oxford Living Dictionaries* online provides for *shrew*, to cite just one example out of all these vilifying words, packs a wallop:

*“hold your nagging tongue, you miserable old shrew!”*

- **So, a wife must be controlled** (“*hold your*”),
- **what she says is not only of no interest but even bothersome** (“*nagging tongue*”),
- **she is denigrated and insulted** (“*you miserable*” and “*old*” in the tiresome sense, or just plain “*old*”),
- **and finally the key insulting epithet, “*shrew*”, is cast her way to drive the point home.**

And with that, on to the first examined paraphrase of meaning for *spinster*, from *Oxford*:

### 3.8.1 The *Oxford Living Dictionaries* online has the following paraphrase of meaning in their *British & World English* dictionary<sup>153</sup>:

*“An unmarried woman, typically an older woman beyond the usual age for marriage”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, there are example sentences, and they also provide a detailed usage note. Their *US English* paraphrase of meaning and usage note are identical to their *British & World English* ones. Here is the *usage note*:

*“The development of the word spinster is a good example of the way in which a word acquires strong connotations to the extent that it can no longer be used in a neutral sense. From the 17th century the word was appended to names as the official legal*

<sup>152</sup> Another case of *stereotype threat*, for which a paraphrase of meaning was provided earlier in the *senior moment* example.

<sup>153</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222101622/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/spinster>

*description of an unmarried woman: Elizabeth Harris of London, Spinster. This type of use survives today in some legal and religious contexts. In modern everyday English, however, spinster cannot be used to mean simply ‘unmarried woman’; it is now always a derogatory term, referring or alluding to a stereotype of an older woman who is unmarried, childless, prissy, and repressed.”*

### **Analysis of this paraphrase of meaning:**

This paraphrase of meaning takes a whole lot for granted:

- The *heterosexual imaginary*, within which being heterosexual is “automatic,” “normal,” and a part of the *patriarchal established order*. As mentioned earlier in this section, the *heterosexual imaginary* “should never be questioned,” apparently even by lexicographers.
- *Heteronormativity*, including that females are meant to get married to males.
- That a woman *must* be married, as opposed to being so if she *chooses* to be.
- And, that she should be married “before it’s too late,” by which time she is deemed less desirable, to have reduced possibilities for bearing children, and so on.

### **Analysis of the usage note, with comments in bold and italic:**

- “The development of the word *spinster* is a good example of the way in which a word acquires strong connotations to the extent that it can no longer be used in a neutral sense.” ***They start off nicely, with the sort of insight a usage note should provide.***
- “From the 17th century the word was appended to names as the official legal description of an unmarried woman: Elizabeth Harris of London, *Spinster*. This type of use survives today in some legal and religious contexts.” ***They go on to provide an appropriate illustration.***
- “In modern everyday English, however, *spinster* cannot be used to mean simply ‘unmarried woman’; it is now always a derogatory term, referring or alluding to a stereotype of an older woman who is unmarried, childless, prissy, and repressed.” ***They correctly state that it is currently an insulting and stereotyping expression. However, they listed the typecasting adjectives entirely from the patriarchal perspective: unmarried (in contraposition to what she “ought” to be), childless (she is an “unfulfilled” woman), prissy and repressed (so being a “spinster” is her fault).***

- ***Beyond this, Oxford makes no reference to how “spinsters” are othered from the patriarchal “females must be heterosexual and marry men by a certain age” viewpoint.***

In all, a very *patriarchal* treatment of the expression. There was no mention of the concept of *patriarchy*, women being *objects* (as juxtaposed to reciprocating partners) of marriage, “*spinsters*” being *othered* for “not doing their part for the economy” nor “providing men their legitimate heirs” etc. *Oxford* provides paraphrases of meaning for *heteronormative*, *heterosexual*, and *patriarchal*, but they did not make the connections necessary to provide an inclusive paraphrase of meaning for *spinster*.

The general English dictionaries can only go so far. Inclusive and bias-free usage lexicons are necessary, in order to make the more subtle exclusion/inclusion connections.

*Oxford* does point out in their *usage note* that the expression is derogatory, but they provide a male-centred explanation, as explained above. It is worth noting that as useful as *usage notes* can be, many (if not most) users don’t read *usage notes*, especially if they use a dictionary as a quick reference to consult and get back to what they were doing. So, unless a user “reads all the way through,” the derogatory character of the lemma would not even be made known to anyone consulting the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online*.

### **3.8.2: The Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as seen on their website on 22 February 2019<sup>154</sup>:**

*“a woman who is not married, especially a woman who is no longer young and seems unlikely ever to marry”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and is labelled as *old-fashioned*.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

This *Cambridge* paraphrase of meaning is very similar to the *Oxford* one, as seen in **Table 3:2**:

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<sup>154</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222101746/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/spinster>



Table 3:2: Comparison of <i>spinster</i> , for:	
Oxford	Cambridge
<i>“An unmarried woman”</i>	<i>“a woman who is not married”</i>
<i>“typically an older woman”</i>	<i>“especially a woman who is no longer young”</i>
<i>“beyond the usual age for marriage”</i> <i>(There is still a glimmer of hope that some man may anyway take her).</i>	<i>“and seems unlikely ever to marry”</i> <i>(She may as well give up!)</i>

There is no need to rehash the additional commentary on the paraphrase of meaning. They both had essentially the same thing to say, and they both failed to mention anything about the *othering* and *patriarchal* aspects of the paraphrase of meaning, marriage “requirement,” and so on.

This is the first of several dictionaries in this group label to *spinster* as *old-fashioned*. To many people, in the context of *spinster*, “old-fashioned” is associated more with “quaint” than with “if you use it you will be *othering* older females.”

### 3.8.3: The Merriam-Webster Dictionary has three senses<sup>155</sup>:

*“an unmarried woman of gentle family”*

*“an unmarried woman and especially one past the common age for marrying”*

*“a woman who seems unlikely to marry”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, the first sense is identified as *archaic*, and example sentences are provided.

#### Analysis of the paraphrases of meaning:

- *“an unmarried woman of gentle family” Since Merriam-Webster labels this sense as archaic, then the othering of the rest of us, the “masses,” is nullified.*
- *“an unmarried woman and especially one past the common age for marrying” Essentially the same as Oxford.*

<sup>155</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222101838/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/spinster>

- “a woman who seems unlikely to marry” *Somewhere between the slim Oxford hopes and the “why bother going on living” Cambridge perspective.*

As mentioned, since they labelled the first sense as *archaic*, they get a pass on that one. For the other two, please see the comments on *Oxford* and *Cambridge*. *Archaic* in the context of the lemma *spinster* is a more precise label than *old-fashioned*.

#### 3.8.4: The *Macmillan Dictionary*<sup>156</sup>:

“an insulting word for a woman who is not married and is past the age when women usually get married”

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and labelled as *old-fashioned*. The paraphrase of meaning for their *American English* dictionary is identical.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

This is the first dictionary in this group to give even a hint at the offensiveness of this expression in their paraphrase of meaning. However, despite noting that the word is *insulting*, they anyway provide a male-centred paraphrase of meaning, and offer no insight into the reason it is offensive. Please see the *Cambridge* comments for more on the *old-fashioned* label.

#### 3.8.5: The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*<sup>157</sup>:

“A woman, especially an older one, who has not married.”

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun and noted as *often offensive*.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

The paraphrase of meaning is very similar to the others, and there is no insight into how it is *often offensive*.

<sup>156</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222101931/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/spinster>

<sup>157</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190418084736/https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=spinster>

### 3.8.6: The *Chambers Dictionary*<sup>158</sup>:

*“a woman, especially one who is middle-aged or older, who has never been married.”*

**Additional item in the dictionary article:** identified as a noun.

The only difference in this paraphrase of meaning in relation to the others is that *Chambers* more specifically identifies the age group that is being *othered*.

### 3.8.7: The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*<sup>159</sup>:

*“an unmarried woman, usually one who is no longer young and seems unlikely to marry”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and labelled as *old-fashioned*.

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

Almost identical to the *Cambridge* paraphrase of meaning. Please see the *Cambridge* comments for more on the *old-fashioned* label.

### 3.8.8: The *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* has two senses<sup>160</sup>:

*“a woman still unmarried beyond the usual age of marrying.”*

*“a woman who has never married”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun. The first sense is noted to be *disparaging and offensive*, and they mention that the second is used in “*chiefly law*” settings.

They also added a *usage note*:

*“The meaning ‘a woman beyond the usual marriageable age’ is used with disparaging intent and perceived as insulting. It implies negative qualities such as being fussy or undesirable.”*

<sup>158</sup> As mentioned, unfortunately no links, permanent or otherwise, can be made for the articles *Chambers* has.

<sup>159</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102040/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/spinster>

<sup>160</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102146/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/spinster?s=t>

**Analysis of the paraphrases of meaning:**

*Sense one* is almost identical to *Oxford*.

The paraphrase of meaning for *sense two* is biased from the “marriage is a given” perspective, as mentioned earlier.

*The usage note correctly identifies the “disparaging intent,” but the wording of “perceived as insulting” makes it sound like a woman may be “interpreting” it as offensive. No. It’s offensive, period. No one is being forced to use this word, so if they employ it they will likely offend. “It implies negative qualities such as being fussy or undesirable” For “fussy” please see the comments on “shrew.” “Undesirable” makes is sound like the only factor men use to “choose” a women is “looks;” but then, it usually is. For more on “not having the required looks and behaviour,” please see the illustrative text of the [Calvo \(2008\)](#) “cow conversations” in Chapter two.*

**3.8.9: The COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary offers this<sup>161</sup>:**

*“A spinster is a woman who has never been married; used especially when talking about an old or middle-aged woman”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and labelled as *old-fashioned*.

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Basically identical to that of the *Chambers Dictionary*. Please see the *Cambridge* comments for more on the *old-fashioned* label.

**3.8.10: The Collins English Dictionary has two applicable senses<sup>162</sup>:**

*“an unmarried woman regarded as being beyond the age of marriage”*

*“a woman who has never married”*

<sup>161</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102239/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/spinster>

<sup>162</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102239/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/spinster>

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun. The second sense has the following label “*Law (in legal documents)*”

#### **Analysis of sense one:**

Pretty much the same as the others.

#### **Analysis of sense two:**

Identical to that provided by *Random House*, except that *Collins* provides no usage note pointing out that the expression is offensive.

### **3.8.11: Patterns observed in the paraphrases of meaning of the general English dictionaries.**

In all, there were twelve dictionaries, and twelve analyses of the paraphrases of meaning they provided when *spinster* was entered into the search box on their respective websites. The similarity of the paraphrases of meaning provided is remarkable. Since the wording is by and large the same for all twelve lexicons, the bias and exclusion is also pretty much equivalent amongst them.

Only four of the twelve dictionaries included words such as *insulting* or *offensive* in their paraphrases of meaning, but there was not a single instance in which even the remotest clue to the hefty *patriarchal* exclusion and bias against women was given by any of them. Nor was there anything on the *gender binary*, *heteronormativity*, the “*marriage ideal*,” *male hegemony*, and so on.

Four of the lexicons labelled *spinster* as *old-fashioned*. As explained in more detail in the analysis of the *Cambridge* paraphrase of meaning, in the context of *spinster*, “old-fashioned” is likelier to be associated more with “quaint” than with “if you use it you will be *othering* older females.” To include an “*old-fashioned*” label without any further explanations into the real sources of the *othering*, which continue to occur to this very day, helps render this *othering* invisible.

### 3.8.12: How an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with this expression:

**spinster** *n* – *single woman, single, singleton, unattached woman, woman.* A disparaging and denigrating expression to refer to a female who has never been married, particularly if above an “expected” (and therefore required) age. The expression connotes that such females are unworthy, undesirable, and unendurable, while evoking images of them as being lonely, unfulfilled, and ashamed of themselves. Taking for granted that women should all be married by a given age is rooted in the *heterosexual imaginary* and in *patriarchal heteronormativity*. Although *unmarried woman* is preferable to *spinster*, it still gives the impression that women ought to be married as opposed to making their own lifestyle choices. And, while *single* and *unattached* also have a bit of a “why isn’t she with someone else” feel to them, there is much less associated stigma. Simply using *woman* should work in almost any context.

Since *spinster* involves a lot more bias and exclusion than initially meets the eye, this article has a comparatively detailed paraphrase of meaning. A couple of widely utilised expressions that are biased (yet appear as not being so) for this concept are explained, in order to help discourage their use. The more inclusive alternatives are provided right after the lemma for immediate access, in case that was all a given user wanted at that moment. Please refer to Chapters Four and Five for a full analysis on the users, and on the article structure (and much more) of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, respectively.

### 3.8.13: Conclusions for *spinster*:

As seen in this example, among all these general English dictionaries, there was not a single instance in which even the remotest clue to the hefty *patriarchal* vilification and oppression of women embedded into the expression *spinster* was provided to users looking up this word.

Therefore, in the case of *spinster*, these dictionaries performed the following dubious tasks:

- **For learners of the language:** indoctrination; women *must* be married by a given age, or else they are unhappy, unfulfilled, undesirable, unbearable, etc.

- **For native speakers:** reinforcement of these myths.
- **For all dictionary users:** the propagation of bias and exclusion against women through the continued use of this expression making reference to this patriarchal “requirement” for women to be married by a certain age. In this manner, even those who care enough about all people to express themselves inclusively, would look up this lemma and get an insidious dose of *patriarchal propaganda*, to then be further disseminated while completely unaware of the harmful consequences.

General English dictionaries are naturally not required to enumerate all the bias and exclusion in the paraphrases of meaning they provide, but certain minimums should reasonably be expected. *Oxford* and *Random House* did take the trouble to each include a *usage note*, but, they explain why the expression is derogatory from a *male-centred standpoint*, and therefore did not mention anything regarding the *othering* on account of the *patriarchal society*, *male hegemony*, *gender roles*, *heteronormativity*, the “*marriage ideal*,” and so on.

The providing of paraphrases of meaning that are biased is not acceptable for any kind of dictionary, be they targeted for learners, or otherwise.

Only the suggested paraphrase of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they truly are, the way a dictionary is supposed to. This further highlights the need for such lexicons, in order for users to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the real-life use and attendant consequences of so many expressions.

A problem in the current lexicographic practice is a lack of inclusive and bias-free dictionaries. To date, metalexicography has not assisted practical lexicographers in a sufficient way to plan and compile such dictionaries; a deficiency being addressed by this dissertation. This work may also help the publishers of “regular” dictionaries while they consider re-evaluating their priorities where unbiased and inclusive coverage is concerned. This would apply equally to advanced learner’s dictionaries or otherwise.

[Fairclough \(1989:1\)](#) stated that: “*consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.*” If this dissertation can help practical lexicographers become better aware of what is truly going on, hopefully they too can be *bias-free*.

### 3.9: Example Four, *rape culture*.

As detailed earlier, the institutionalised system of male dominance over women is embodied in *patriarchy*. The *othering* and *oppression* of human females, along with the concomitant violence, exploitation, vilification, and subjugation have also been thoroughly explored. As also mentioned, *patriarchy* cannot function without the ***gender binary***, which itself is enforced through ***gender policing***. *Policing* involves the use, and abuse, of power and force, to ensure *control* and *compliance*. In such a state of affairs, consent is not requested, and certainly not required. To those doing the *policing*, *consent* is irrelevant. A lack of *active consent* is what makes any sexual activity involving genitals a *rape*.

The daily lives of many females is an unending succession of reminders of who has the power, who is in control, and who employs force and violence to make certain that the *established order* of males over females is maintained. This is all facilitated and promoted within the *rape culture* we live in, as will be detailed in this example. As is the case with ***gender binary***<sup>163</sup> in which *Longman* gets credit for being the sole publisher to include the expression, this time *Oxford* and *Random House* deserve recognition for being the only ones that had an article for *rape culture*.

***Gender binary*** and *rape culture* both are relatively common expressions which may eventually be incorporated into all larger general English dictionaries, but for now their absence in most is indicative of how terminology dealing with bias and exclusion is pretty much overlooked in these lexicons. Beyond this, having only a smattering of slightly more specialised expressions focusing on inclusion/exclusion does not help in acquiring an appreciation of the bigger picture of *oppression* and *othering*, and once users are frustrated enough times by not finding searched lemmas, they may not bother anymore with a given dictionary when it comes to inclusive usage and bias-free expression. More on these topics in Chapters Four and Five.

#### 3.9.1: The paraphrase of meaning for *rape culture*, as seen on the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online* website on 22 February 2019,<sup>164</sup> for their *British & World English dictionary*:

*“A society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.”*

<sup>163</sup> ***Gender binary*** is defined in the *policing of masculinity* example.

<sup>164</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102518/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rape\\_culture](https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102518/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rape_culture)



*“the film takes a look at rape culture and what it means to be a woman in a male-dominated society”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, an example sentence is incorporated into the paraphrase of meaning, and there are more example sentences. The paraphrase of meaning in their *US English Dictionary* is identical.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

- *“A society or environment whose prevailing social attitudes”* **Oxford** provides a solid image of the possible settings, by specifying the general (*society*) and the specific (*environment*), as dictated by our current (*prevailing*) culture. **Rape culture** is indeed everywhere in society, *and* can be manifested in any given setting, such as a college campus, at home, or on the street.
- *“have the effect of normalizing or trivializing sexual assault and abuse.”* **Although sexual assault and abuse are horrible things whose importance should not be downplayed, they do not necessarily include rape, and rape must be specifically named here as well. They could have phrased it in this manner: *“have the effect of normalizing or trivializing rape, among other forms of sexual assault and abuse.”***

*Oxford* also incorporates a very fitting example along with the paraphrase of meaning:

*“the film takes a look at rape culture and what it means to be a woman in a male-dominated society”*

- As mentioned several times, the media (including films, of course) shapes the way most people see the world.
- A **rape culture** can and does flourish in a male-dominated society where violence, including that of a sexual nature, is considered to be routine.
- Since women are the prime victims, the focus on their experience is apt.

Although it would likely be beyond the scope of such a lexicon to provide further insight into how these *social attitudes* are shaped, their paraphrase of meaning would have been significantly more informative if they had made some kind of reference to *patriarchy*, the *oppression of women*, and/or *victim blaming*. This would have also helped in better

understanding how the *normalising* and *trivialising* come about. As will be seen in this section, *rape culture*<sup>165</sup> and *victim blaming* are intimately interconnected.

### 3.9.2: The *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*<sup>166</sup>:

*“a subset of values, beliefs, and behaviors in a society that trivializes or normalizes sexual violence, including rape:*

*Slut-shaming is one manifestation of rape culture.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and there are no example sentences aside from the one included with the paraphrase of meaning.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

The paraphrase of meaning very concisely gets the job properly done:

- *“Values” and “beliefs” are socially constructed, and as such are of an arbitrary nature. These autocratic “morals” can result in very harmful and unrestrained “behaviors.”*
- *“In a society that trivializes or normalizes sexual violence, including rape”*
  - *Random House enumerates these horrible behaviours directly. No euphemisms, no excuses.*
  - *Such behaviours are of such an everyday and “normal” character, that they are an integral part of the culture.*
  - *The atrociousness of these behaviours is downplayed in such a culture.*

*Random House* also incorporates a suitable example along with the paraphrase of meaning:

*“Slut-shaming<sup>167</sup> is one manifestation of rape culture.”*

This example sentence aptly makes reference to a *victim-blaming* aspect of a *rape culture*. In all, *Random House* has provided a bias-free paraphrase of meaning.

<sup>165</sup> The next example expression in this chapter is *victim blaming*.

<sup>166</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190424084720/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/rape-culture?s=t>

<sup>167</sup> As per Oxford, *slut shaming* is: “The action or fact of stigmatizing a woman for engaging in behaviour judged to be promiscuous or sexually provocative.” Permalink: [https://web.archive.org/web/20190424094831/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/slut\\_shaming](https://web.archive.org/web/20190424094831/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/slut_shaming)

### 3.9.3: A legal definition of *rape*.

The legal definitions of *rape* have varied over time and source, but the FBI<sup>168</sup> has a surprisingly good one<sup>169</sup>:

*“Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”*

This paraphrase of meaning encompasses a lot, succinctly, by what is included and *omitted*, as it:

- acknowledges that potential *victims* have wills of their own (they must give *consent*)
- includes victims that may be male, female, or non-gender-binary conforming
- does not imply that there must be physical resistance<sup>170</sup>, so it is rightfully considered to be rape when:
  - a person is drugged (or otherwise has impaired judgement), or otherwise does not possess the mental capacity to give *affirmative consent*
  - anyone is in a situation of extreme power imbalance (such as a priest raping an altar boy, a teacher or coach raping a student, an older family member raping a younger one, multiple males perpetrating a gang rape, and so on)
  - somebody is otherwise coerced (such as when the perpetrator brandishes a weapon and threatens to kill the victim unless there is compliance, the rapist telling the victim that a loved one will be killed, and so on)
- indicates that “breaking the threshold” is enough to be a rape (“*penetration, no matter how slight*”)
- may be a sex organ, any body part, or an object in the vagina or anus (previously it was only the penis being inserted into the vagina)
- includes insertion in the mouth of a rapist’s sex organ (as mentioned, previously it could only be rape if the penis was inserted into the vagina)

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<sup>168</sup> [USA] Federal Bureau of Investigation.

<sup>169</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190316201531/https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2013/crime-in-the-u.s.-2013/violent-crime/rape>

<sup>170</sup> Formerly, and even currently in many jurisdictions, it wasn’t (or still isn’t) rape unless the victim forcibly resisted.

### 3.9.4: An inclusive and bias-free paraphrase of meaning of *rape culture*.

[Buchwald, Fletcher, and Roth \(2005:xi\)](#) provide a paraphrase of meaning of *rape culture* that would be fit for an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary (or an excellent general English one):

*“What is a rape culture? It is a complex set of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent. In a rape culture, women perceive a continuum of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. In a rape culture both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, as inevitable as death or taxes. This violence, however, is neither biologically nor divinely ordained. Much of what we accept as inevitable is in fact the expression of values and attitudes that can change.”*

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

Unlike general English lexicons, an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary considers above all the needs of those that are oppressed, othered, victimised, made invisible, rendered impotent, vilified, and so on. The regular dictionaries appear to cater to the welfare of *patriarchy*, along with its interests, including capitalism, gender roles, the subjugation of females and “other” groups, and so on. Here is a point by point breakdown of this paraphrase of meaning (**with commentary from the lexicographic, sociolinguistic, and egalitarian perspectives in bold**):

- *“What is a rape culture?”* **Ordinarily it is not elegant to start a paraphrase of meaning in which the lemma itself is framed within a question, since obviously that is what the article is about. However, in this case, it presages a fierce rebuke.**
- *“It is a complex set of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women.”* **Complex hints at the desired eradication of this “culture” requiring a multidisciplinary approach. Beliefs tells us that those who adhere to rape-culture mentality often do so uncritically, steadfastly, and traditionally.**
- *“Encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women”* **starts to get specific about what the problem is. At this point it might have been helpful to include the expression *rape myths*, since they are alluded to in the paraphrase of meaning.**

- *“It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent.” Here they are touching upon a couple of the cornerstones of pornography, which could have been mentioned specifically.*
- *“In a rape culture, women perceive a continuum of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself.” Gender-based street harassment is probably the most common form of quotidian harassment (Joseph (2016)).* (Please see more on this a bit further below).
- *“A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm.” Patriarchy and gender inequalities set the stage for this.*
- *“In a rape culture both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, as inevitable as death or taxes.” This is one of the most harmful rape myths.*
- *“This violence, however, is neither biologically nor divinely ordained.” No “boys will be boys” mentality here, nor “this is the order preordained by our God.”*
- *“Much of what we accept as inevitable is in fact the expression of values and attitudes that can change.” Despite the pervasiveness of a rape culture, there is still hope; but both men and women have a great deal to unlearn.*

In all, an outstanding paraphrase of meaning that could have wrapped it all up even more elegantly if there had been the direct mention of the three columns upon which *rape culture* rests:

- *victim blaming*
- *protection of the perpetrators*
- *prevalence of rape myths*

### 3.9.5: Street harassment.

Apropos *street harassment*, [Joseph \(2016\)](#) has plenty to reveal regarding this plague, including:

- Gender-based *street harassment*, including catcalls, “invitations,” obscene gestures, following, groping, masturbation, and assaults is probably the most common form of quotidian harassment.
- *Street harassment* is an everyday component within a constellation of verbal and/or physical acts of terrorism targeting females, whose ability to simply be “outside” is threatened.
- Males “bond” through this harassment, as it often is perpetrated by groups of men.
- Men of any age, socioeconomic status, etc., may perpetrate verbal and/or physical acts of *street harassment*.

- It is a form of *gender policing*, sociocultural control, reinforcement of male dominance, and a part of “keeping women in their subordinated place.”

[Murillo \(2013\)](#) flags *catcalls* and related *street harassment* for what they are: “*macho*” behaviour arising out of insecurity and fear, which perpetrators inflict upon innocent victims in many forms. These may include unwanted and confrontational comments of any kind, especially about body parts and/or attire. These are usually of a vulgar, aggressive, and *paternalistic* nature. She goes on to link *feminism* to the fight against all oppression in all forms, including *heteropatriarchy*, *capitalism*, *racism*, *colonialism*, the *gender binary*, *speciesism*, *ableism*, and the rest.

### 3.9.6: The media and *rape culture*.

In a society with a firmly entrenched *rape culture*, quite deplorably, *rape* is always “in the air.” Figuratively, in that distressing feeling that sexual violence can occur anytime anywhere, and literally, in the radio waves that envelop us and carry internet traffic, television and radio broadcasting media, and so on, replete with messages of *objectification*, *dehumanisation*, and *victimisation* of females.

*Victim blaming* plays a prominent part in how rape victims are portrayed in the *media*, with their propaganda being manifested primarily through three mechanisms:

- They make it appear as if the rape was partially or fully the *victim’s fault*.
- They make it seem that any perpetrators are not guilty, or in the worst case only partly so. In many instances the media *defends the rapist*.
- They give priority coverage to lurid “stranger” cases, especially of “middle-class” or higher white females, essentially ignoring the majority of rapes, which are committed by known assailants. This results in the *repeated victimisation of rape victims*, especially of those in less-privileged and/or more vulnerable groups, such as juveniles.

Within a *rape culture*, violence against women is regarded as commonplace, and said violence is a *gendered practice targeting females* primarily through the media and the criminal justice system. [Thacker \(2017\)](#) notes there is pervasive *victim blaming* throughout both, including prejudiced media coverage and a biased judicial system.

Along similar lines, [Berns \(2017\)](#) has this to say:

- The main venue for the perpetuation of *rape culture* is the popular media.

- There is prevalent *victim blaming* in the media coverage of rapes, making it seem like the victims asked for it, deserved it, and/or did not take the necessary precautions.
- The media affects public policy, which includes how the criminal justice system operates.

### 3.9.7: Sexuality, gender scripts, and rape within a rape culture.

[Kimmel \(1998\)](#) shares many observations on *sexuality*, *gender roles*, and *rape*, including:

- Male sexuality “is more about predatory conquest than pleasure and connection.”
- Sexuality is a social construct, whose “chief building block” is another social construct: *gender*. *Gender scripts* are strictly enforced, reasserting men’s power over women.
- “*Women’s sexual agency, women’s sense of entitlement to desire, is drowned out by the incessant humming of male desire, propelling him ever forward.*” ... “*Sometimes that hum can be so loud that it drowns out the actual voice of the real live woman that he’s with.*” ... “*Men suffer from a socialized deafness, a hearing impairment that strikes only when women say ‘no’.*” ([Kimmel, 1998:266](#))

These lead to entitlement, aggression, sexual predation, and rape. He correlates a male athlete’s hypermasculine “win at any cost” mentality with the concomitant aggression and violence on the field, into aggression and violence in their relationships with women. In both cases, the objective is to “*score*”<sup>171</sup>.

### 3.9.8: Rape myths/lies.

[Phipps, Ringrose, Renold, and Jackson \(2018:1\)](#) refer to *rape culture* as:

*“a set of general cultural beliefs supporting men’s violence against women, including the idea that this violence is a fact of life, that there is an association between violence and sexuality, that men are active while women are passive, and that men have a right to sexual intercourse.”*

They make the observation that these beliefs produce common *rape myths*, such as that women enjoy being raped, and how “*there are ‘blurred’ lines around consent*”<sup>172</sup>, all of which promote not believing victims, along with perpetrators having low conviction rates. *Rape myths* serve to protect the perpetrators, vilify the victims, to downplay the severity of, and even attempt to legitimise rape. Common *rape myths* include that most rapes are

<sup>171</sup> In sports, to *score* is to succeed in doing something that counts as points. In sex, to *score* is to succeed in having sex with a targeted partner, especially where a “sexual conquest” is involved. Vulgarly put, in each case, if you get “it” (ball or penis) in “where it counts,” it is tallied as a *score*.

<sup>172</sup> [Phipps, Ringrose, Renold, and Jackson \(2018\), p.1.](#)



committed impulsively by strangers<sup>173</sup>, “she meant *yes* when she said *no*,” and nonsense such as “everyone knows that males are biologically programmed to be assertive, sexually aggressive, and overpowering.” That latter *boys will be boys* mindset is even used as a “defence” in rape cases in court ([Scales, 2008](#)).

Each and every one of these “misconceptions,” along with countless others, promote, maintain, and defend the *rape culture*, and vice versa. Therefore, the expression *rape lies* is much more precise than *rape myths*, since it removes the bias, and exposes the *oppression*, *victimisation*, and *othering*. As mentioned, an inclusive usage bias-free and dictionary would help identify, expose, and illustrate the ways culture and society utilise language to oppress, victimise, and other. It is worth noting that none of the general English dictionaries here evaluated have an article for *rape myth*. Needless to say, none has *rape lies* as a listed lemma, neither. Inclusive usage and bias-free lexicons would naturally have both.

### 3.9.9: Dworkin’s *true trinity of woman-hating: rape, pornography, and prostitution*.

The expression *rape culture* refers to the sexual violence and rape within a *patriarchal* and *capitalistic* society where “violence is sexy,” brutality against females is normalised, and the victims are blamed. [Dworkin \(1997\)](#) identifies *rape*, *prostitution*, and *pornography* as the pillars within what she refers to as the *true trinity of woman-hating*. She has plenty to share on all three, including:

**Rape** and *sexual aggression* against females in our “free” society<sup>174</sup>:

- “We live under martial law. We live in a rape culture.”
- “We live under what amounts to a military curfew, enforced by rapists.”
- “We say we’re free citizens in a free society. But we lie. We lie about it every day.”
- The rapist reaffirms his, and society’s *male supremacy*.

**Pornography** from a “real harm to real women” perspective:

- “Pornography is the orchestrated destruction of women’s bodies and souls”<sup>175</sup>
- “Pornography incarnates male supremacy. It is the DNA of male dominance.”<sup>176</sup>
- “Their legacy:” “With pornography, a woman can still be sold after the beatings, the rapes, the pain, the humiliation have killed her.”<sup>177</sup>

<sup>173</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190323180004/https://rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence>

<sup>174</sup> [Dworkin \(1997:116\)](#)

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, p.89.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, p.99.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, p.69.



- The struggle of the victims, mostly females, has been for the most part silenced.

**Prostitution** as a manifestation of sheer desperation:

- *Prostitutes* are in a desperate state, including any or all of the following: living in extreme poverty, being homeless, being victimised by sexual abuse and rape, and/or having been sold or coerced into prostitution, usually by loved ones or a person who claims to be in love.
- Men who pay for sex consider the *prostitutes* to be their *property*, with which to do as they wish. They may humiliate them, have violently sadistic sex, physically injure, or in some cases, murder them; any way the *johns* decide to exert their power and misogyny.

As a whole, [Dworkin \(1997\)](#) advocates for women to defend themselves any way they can, to fight back, to escape from the situations that hold them captive in fear and torture, and to organise with other women to end *rape, pornography, and prostitution*.

### 3.9.10: It's all connected: other influences and manifestations of a *rape culture*.

It's called a *rape culture*, since it is pervasive in society.

[Gravelin, Biernat, and Bucher \(2018\)](#) make several fundamental connections between *rape culture* and *victim blaming*, including:

- In relation to other assault-related crimes, *victim blaming* is significantly higher for rape victims.
- Feminists have long held that rape and sexual assault are motivated by power, and the *gender binary*, which supports male domination and female exploitation.
- Religion also bears a strong influence, as many faiths value male domination and female submission, and the more conservative the religious belief, the likelier it is to blame victims.
- The media's portrayal of women as sexualised objects is seen in advertising, non-pornographic film and television, and in pornography.
- In pornography, film, and music, sexual aggression is portrayed as proper and "normal."
- An indispensable part of a *rape culture* is to keep the victims *silenced*, which is enabled primarily through *rape myths* and *victim blaming*.

Many males regard the women they have sex with as *property*, with which they do whatever they please. *Gendered violence* and *marital rape* are still legal in many countries, so in such cases husbands literally *own* their wives *legally* ([Venkatesh and Randall, 2018](#)).

[Finkelhor and Yllo \(2018\)](#) share this on rape in marriage:

- Most people think of forced sex in marriage as little more than a marital squabble, and not as a “real rape” consisting of a violent attack where the life of the victim is in danger.
- All marital rapes incorporate psychological violence, and most also include physical violence, and some result in disfigurement and/or incapacitating injuries.

[Filipovic \(2008\)](#) draws the parallel between the anti-abortion and anti-contraception movements and *rape culture*, in that the objective of each of these is to deny females their bodily autonomy, self-determination, and the power of making their own decisions. She also connects *rape culture* and its violent subjugation of women to other forms of oppression: it’s the same *patriarchs* (regardless of their gender) who fight gender equity, the rights of non-heterosexuals, and racial equality.

Here is this, from [Messina-Dysert \(2015\)](#) on some of the ways religious discourse perpetuates a *rape culture*:

- through their *androcentric* focus
- on account of their *patriarchal* assumptions
- determining the honour or *shame* of a woman based on her chastity, and how
- women who are raped have “sullied their relationship with God.”

[Wright \(2017\)](#) puts forth that:

- *Beauty pageants* and *pornography* set attractiveness, appearance, and behaviour standards that must be adhered to by females in order to obtain and keep the approval of *patriarchs*. Females have to look fabulous, and submit equally fabulously.
- The *gaze* of these males of any age has its harmful consequences, including boys learning about sex and sexuality with an oppressive perspective, and older males seeking sexual activity involving more pain and coercion (including rape).
- The message of “*the gaze*:” “*We*” as men watch and “*they*” as women *must* have the appearance and submission *we* require of *them*. (Including when faced with rape).
- Both *mainstream pornography* and *beauty pageants* promote the misogynistic heteropatriarchal perspective that women are objects to be consumed, and each are capitalistic industries catering to males.

Whether it is “regular *johns*” at home, “*peacekeepers*” working for the “*Department of Defense*,” a *United Nations “humanitarian mission*,” or wherever any armed forces may

be<sup>178</sup>, it seems that *rape*, *prostitution*, and *pornography* are “just the way life is.” The raping, killing, pillaging, and terror they perpetrate and inflict are unchanged, though. In a *rape culture*, which can be “exported” to wherever “keepers of peace and human dignity” may be, these armed forces consider the local “native people” their prey. *Pornography* is also tied in, as military barracks and lockers usually have pornographic images pinned up, and there is no shortage of pornography on the smartphones of the soldiers and other personnel, etc.

### 3.9.11: Conclusions, and further thoughts on *rape culture*.

Language and culture are inextricably linked. If there is a language there must be a culture, and vice versa. If we live in a *rape culture*, then *language* inevitably is an enabling part of it.

In Chapter Two it was noted how slaughterhouse animals, irrespective of sex, are prodded on with *gendered* epithets, such as *cunt* and *bitch* ([Calvo, 2008](#)). She further observed that human dominance is a *male* thing, where a callous disregard for the life and suffering of animals is a requirement. It was also demonstrated that the subjugation and violence against non-human animals maps over to human females. How much regard does a rapist, *john*, or consumer of pornography have for the well-being of the females so exploited and harmed? How much esteem is evidenced when a female is addressed or referred to with expressions such as a *cunt* or *bitch*, whether they are being *raped*, otherwise *sexually assaulted*, paid for sex, subjected to *street harassment*, or in any manner denigrated and objectified?

As humans, we are all programmed for language learning and use; each of us with varying abilities to do so. As explained earlier, language shapes how people think, behave, see, and experience life, and how they treat each other. Nobody is born knowing what words like *cunt*, *bitch*, and *whore* mean, nor with a predisposition to use them with such hate and violence. That is something that must be learned within a shared culture and language.

*Rape* is about power, control, aggression, violent subjugation, objectification, and denying females a sense agency in their own lives. *Rape* is physically about genitals and penetration, while mentally it is about doing things (in this case appalling things) *without consent*.

In this example, many of the inner workings of a *rape culture* were explored from the sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and critical reality awareness perspectives. These included

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<sup>178</sup> Rape in war and “humanitarian missions” was briefly explored in Chapter Two.

*street harassment*, the *media* and a *rape culture*, *gender scripts*, *rape myths/lies*, and Dworkin's *true trinity of woman-hating: rape, pornography, and prostitution*.

A *rape culture* depends on several things, including there being a society where:

- *Patriarchy, masculine hegemony, gender inequalities*, and the vilification, dehumanisation, and subjugation of females is ever-present. Women are considered to be mere objects that can be bought, sold, mistreated, raped, and so on.
- Male sexual aggression is defended and encouraged.
- Violence against women is supported.
- Violence is considered as sexy.
- Sexuality is seen as violent. [Wright, Tokunaga, and Kraus \(2015\)](#) make a direct correlation between pornography consumption and acts of sexual aggression.
- Rape victims are blamed, while the perpetrators are protected.
- Females are under the constant threat of mental and physical violence, which can range from unsolicited lewd remarks (a part of the ubiquitous *street harassment*) and unwanted sexual touching, through rape.
- *Rape lies*, commonly referred to as *rape myths*, help make all the aforementioned possible. In this example, some of these myths were enumerated, explained, and shown to be *patriarchal prattle*.

Links between *pornography*, *prostitution*, and *rape* were delineated. The roles that the media, police, judicial systems, and harmful traditions play in the maintenance of a *rape culture*, along with the revictimization of rape victims were also mentioned. Cops, attorneys, and judges are usually disbelieving of what victims try to tell them, and the media commonly protects the perpetrators, blames the victims, and in general make it seem like rape is “a misunderstanding” where *sex* was concerned.

When the media, police, attorneys, and others use the word *sex*, it may be in a biased manner. When *sex* is employed as a euphemism for *rape*, *sexual abuse*, or *sexual violence*, it belittles the severity of such atrocities, condones and encourages the perpetrators, and further intimidates and oppresses the victims. If it was *rape*, *sexual abuse*, or *sexual violence*, it should be called that, specifically by name. Journalists, editors, medical personnel, legislators, anyone involved in the courts of law, including clerks, attorneys, and judges, and even cops, might see matters pertaining to *rape* a bit differently if they took a look at the paraphrases of

meaning, explanations, and exemplifications found in a quality bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary. A fair and objective understanding of what expressions such as *rape*, *rape culture*, *rape myths*, *rape lies*, *victim blaming*, *pornography*, *prostitution*, *sexual violence*, *masculine hegemony*, and *street harassment*, among several others, might help them see the victims of rape, and the *violent patriarchal culture* that promotes and protects it, differently.

[Troost \(2008\)](#) draws attention to the manner in which *rape culture* is a prime example of how most forms of oppression are related, in that they control and/or claim ownership of the bodies of those they subjugate, as is also the case of slavery, and those incarcerated within the prison-industrial complex.

So long as rape prevention is based on women *not* doing things, rape will continue. It is men who must not do things, including *not raping*. And there is much more raping going on than most people suspect, as it is grossly underreported. According to RAINN<sup>179</sup>, only 23% of rape cases are reported, with barely 0.46% of the perpetrators eventually being incarcerated<sup>180</sup>. This is based on 2017 statistics covering the 2010-2016 interval, as reported by the [USA] “*Department of Justice*, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey.” How many people with any level of critical-thinking skills would believe that these numbers, from the Department of “Justice,” reflect reality? But, assuming for a moment that these almost certainly much-underestimated figures are actually correct, your “average rapist” would have to commit over 217 rapes before facing jail<sup>181</sup>.

In order to prevent rapes, it will be necessary to combat the *rape culture* through a broad sociocultural approach, in which it is understood that *rape myths* and *victim blaming* promote rape and other sexual assaults. Stating things as they truly are will play a critical part in the termination of this *rape culture*.

Of all the general English Dictionaries being here evaluated, only two publishers had a paraphrase of meaning for *rape culture*, which as we have seen, is so timely and relevant to our current society (and has been for quite a while, for that matter).

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<sup>179</sup> RAINN (*Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network*) is the nation’s [USA] largest anti-sexual violence organization (as per their website, here permalinked):

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190321173727/https://www.rainn.org/about-rainn>

<sup>180</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190321173033/https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>

<sup>181</sup> So calculated: 0.46% percent is 0.0046, multiplied by 217 rapes, equals 0.9982 incarcerations.

When dictionaries talk, people listen, people learn, people speak, and people ever so slightly alter their ideology, be it on a conscious or unconscious level. There has been abundant mischaracterisation and legitimisation of rape, victims have been kept sufficiently silent, and the overall oppression and victimisation of females have gone far enough. If the othering and oppression that characterises our “civilisation” are to be eradicated, not only are the lexicographers preparing general English Dictionaries going to have to start paying more attention to what is truly going on, but there is also going to be the need for lexicons that are specifically tailored to the identification, description, and consequences of biased and exclusive usage, along with providing bias-free and inclusive alternatives.

### 3.10: Example Five, *victim blaming*.

The bias that the general English dictionaries may manifest is seen not just in how they provide paraphrases of meaning for their listed lemmas, but also in how significant and frequently-encountered expressions are simply not included at all. One of many examples of this is found in *victim blaming*.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, an *inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary* would feature three types of lemmas, one of which would be those that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. These lemmas include *victim blaming*, the example to be explored in depth in this section.

#### 3.10.1: An inclusive and bias-free paraphrase of meaning for *victim blaming*.

Despite the concept of *victim blaming* being firmly entrenched in our language, culture, and society, as will be further illustrated in this segment, none of the general English dictionaries here examined have an article for this expression<sup>182</sup>. The following is how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might handle *victim blaming*<sup>183</sup>:

**victim blaming** – A phenomenon which typifies the bias held against victims. It is the attempt to attribute partial or complete blame to everyone from rape victims through the countless people slaughtered by invading armies. Utilised especially against females, “minorities,” occupied countries, and other oppressed people, such as those of limited financial means. The established order of *victim blaming* is enforced mainly through three mechanisms: 1) To make it appear as if whatever happened was partially or fully the victim’s fault. 2) To make it seem that any perpetrators are not guilty, or in the worst case only partly so. 3) The repeated victimisation of victims.

Although Chapter Five will go into detail on the structures of an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary, it is worth making a couple of comments on some items in the *article structure* of *victim blaming*:

<sup>182</sup> It is worth noting that at the time this dissertation was written, that the exact phrase “victim blaming” (within quotes) had over 2,000,000 “google hits,” which attests to its frequent use.

<sup>183</sup> This paraphrase of meaning would also work for a general English dictionary that provides bias-free and inclusive coverage.

- Since this is an expression that provides a deeper understanding into how hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering work, it includes a concise list of the key points a user should keep in mind when interpreting discourse, or any events taking place in real life.
- Several specific instances of this phenomenon are given, to help illustrate how extensive *victim blaming* is, and to better hammer in the real-life relevance of this phenomenon. This is a facet that the regular dictionaries are particularly weak in.
- Since this is an expression that helps to better comprehend bias and exclusion, no unbiased nor inclusive alternatives are provided, since they don't apply.
- There is a great deal of useful information presented in a very succinct paraphrase of meaning. At a bit over 100 words for the entire article, many might anyway say that this is "too long" for a dictionary. There will be more on this in Chapter Five, but, for now suffice it so say, with electronic lexicons, is this even relevant anymore?

### 3.10.2: The concept of *victim blaming* within the greater sociolinguistic and sociocultural context:

For many, certain realities don't exist until something that only happens to "other" people happens to them. Many people may momentarily see what goes on and then quickly forget, but all it takes is a flash to be reminded of how things truly are. In a society that tends to blame the victims and vindicate the aggressors and perpetrators, countless people are forced to live in fear and pain.

Nobody is born to be a *victim blamer*. Or a *patriarch*, *misogynist*, *rapist*, *domestic abuser*, *sexual harasser*, *racist*, or otherwise violent and hate-filled person for that matter. Culture, society, and language program us to fear, hate, and oppress, through contrived and destructive constructs such as *races* and *genders*. Bias-free and inclusive usage reference works, led by dictionaries, will play an instrumental role in the identification, explanation, and illustration of how hate, intolerance, oppression, violence, and power work. As is being shown in this chapter, the general English dictionaries are biased in favour of the established order, so victims are revictimized, even in these lexicons. The absence of *victim blaming* in them is yet another manifestation of this. To *victim blamers*, if something is not mentioned, that something "did not happen." Not including this lemma promotes keeping the victims invisible.

In order for the general English dictionaries to improve in this regard, and for the preparation of lexicons which are dedicated to bias-free and inclusive usage, practical lexicographers



might consider redirecting the approach they take when dealing not just with specific expressions, but to add a healthy amount of empathy to their work as a whole.

Language helps shape our reality, and perhaps even defines it. The approach the lexicographers of these general dictionaries have been taking evidences that they need to be more aware of certain aspects of our shared reality. In their indispensable and highly influential work, they are making a lot of decisions for all of us, but not taking into account the needs of many of us. This dissertation, among other things, will hopefully assist existing and future lexicographers to refocus their lens a bit, including bringing the needs of victims much more to the forefront.

As a part of helping dictionary writers “think like bias-free and inclusive lexicographers,” this section will also explore a couple situations where *victim blaming* proliferates. Each of these will not just illustrate vital aspects of *victim blaming*, but also exemplify the connectedness of fear, hate, violence, and oppression. Illustrative texts could also be worked in to such works, to provide added insight to users.

This section will also demonstrate how we are programmed by our culture, society, and language to *blame victims*. To be sure, people decide for themselves if they too will be *victim blamers*. But, in order to make proper decisions, people must be well informed, and that is where lexicographers preparing bias-free and inclusive usage dictionaries come into the picture.

### 3.10.3: Examples and illustrations of *victim blaming*.

In Chapter Two of this dissertation there are several examples of *victim blaming*. For instance, in Harlow’s “Love in infant monkeys” ([Harlow, 1959](#)) experiments, and in other animal research such as implanting probes in monkey brains, the three *victim-blaming* mechanisms enumerated are prominently manifested:

- 1) Animals are considered by most people to be inferior to humans, so in being of lesser value, monkeys could be used for such experimentation, for “our” benefit. Or, as [McDonald \(1986\)](#) pointed out: painful experimentation on non-human animals for “scientific knowledge” was justified by the Cartesian perspective that animals are nothing more than machines. (Thus, any harm coming to animals is *their* fault, since they anyway “feel nothing,” etc.)

- 2) Harlow and other researchers were purportedly performing *scientific experimentation* “for the greater good,” thus these were “noble” endeavours, so how could they be at fault in any regard?
- 3) The monkeys and other animals were taken from their natural habitats, and experimented on. Then, they died in the process, were killed, or simply thrown away to die. They were victimised again and again, to death.

A *speciesist* perspective and relationship with non-human animals makes all this pain, suffering, and death acceptable and commonplace, and the *victims* are to blame, not “us.”

In sexual slavery, females<sup>184</sup> are first victimised by being taken from their homes and society, they have their freedom taken away, and then are repeatedly victimised by their vaginas, anuses, breasts, and the rest of their bodies being abused without a second thought to their well-being, self-determination, or their personhood. The sexual traffickers are supposedly “just trying to make a living” by providing “services” for which there is demand. In this light, the perpetrators are “not really guilty,” while the victims are victimised again and again.

[Sabo, Shaw, Ingram, Teufel-Shone, Carvajal, Guernsey de Zapiena, Rosales, Redondo, Garcia, Rubio-Goldsmith \(2014\)](#) compellingly make the connection between immigration laws “at the top” and the daily hell that anyone “looking Mexican” lives “on the bottom.” They explain how immigration laws, the militarisation of the US/Mexico border, and excessively violent enforcement policies serve to victimise, terrorise, torture, and kill Hispanics. Other manifestations of this institutionalised victimisation include undue economic hardship, unnecessary obstacles to obtaining health care, discrimination of all kinds, and extreme stress anytime the border must be crossed. They are victimised again and again. This is what the *legal* immigrants have to endure.

Violence, be it by the “official” border patrollers (with the frontier resembling more a war zone than a crossing between two countries), by “regular” people who satisfy their sadistic tendencies, or by any other non-Hispanic people, result in countless injuries and deaths. A preponderance of the military-type immigration harassment of Hispanics, based on profiling, occurs away from the border (that is, at their workplaces, home, and “on the streets”), where they are supposedly “constitutionally entitled” to be in peace ([Sabo, et al. \(2014\)](#)).

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<sup>184</sup> As mentioned in Chapter Two, most people in sexual slavery, prostitution, and other forms of sexual exploitation, are female.

Each violent act, be it verbal and/or physical, emboldens other racists and haters to commit such acts themselves, and this literally vicious cycle leads to Hispanics being victimised all over the country, with countless *hate crimes* perpetrated against them, ranging from verbal assaults through murder, such as the case of Luis Ramírez detailed in Chapter Two. Ramírez was murdered in Pennsylvania (USA) in 2002, not in the *Deep South*<sup>185</sup> in 1852. The end result of these and similar acts is that pretty much every single Hispanic person in the USA is forced to live in fear of being victimised. Same goes for most women, non-white people, “non-gender-conforming” people, “non-heterosexual” people, “foreigners,” “less-abled” people, and likewise for any members of so many *othered* groups.

Most US Americans like to delude themselves into thinking they are living in “racially progressive” times by believing that slavery was eradicated through the civil war, and that racism ended during the civil rights movement<sup>186</sup>. Although some things have improved, racism is still going strong in the USA (and elsewhere, for that matter). Certain more overt acts may be harder to get away with, but the hate, violence, and discrimination are still there.

The Native Americans, whose land was also stolen by the invaders, were *demonised* and *othered* with contemptible epithets such as *redskin* and *prairie nigger*, with a good number of them being exterminated, and just like Hispanic Peoples, to this day they are an oppressed group.

The use of epithets such as *spic* and *redskin* further “empower” the perpetrators, since the targets of their hate are *dehumanised* and *othered*. The victims are *revictimized* by being buffeted by feelings of denigration and helplessness, rendering them even more vulnerable. In addition to the use of demeaning, vilifying, and reductive portrayals to promote *dehumanisation* and *othering* (Rosenthal, Volkmann, & Zagratzki, 2018), the victims are also again victimised by internalising their *out-group* “status” (Blakesley, 2016).

Within a *critical reality awareness* framework it is straightforward to understand the way many Indigenous Peoples (Native Americans and First Nations, among others) in the USA and Canada might have painful additional secretions of gastric acid paired with agonising thoughts when hearing white people cheerfully wishing each other a “happy Thanksgiving.”

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<sup>185</sup> As per the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary online*: **Deep South**: region of the southeastern U.S. —usually considered to include Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and all or part of the adjacent states of Florida, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas.

<sup>186</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190122114433/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Deep%20South>  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20190121193538/https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/political-science-and-government/political-parties-and-movements/civil-rights-movement>

To them, and to informed and fair-minded people, the national glorification paired with a silence about the genocidal conquest is a bit much. When the continuous subjugation of Indigenous Peoples “throughout history” to this very day is factored in, it’s way too much. Thanksgiving is just a big annual reminder. The day to day oppression needs no remembrance to have its effect.

[Kurtiş, Adams, and Yellow Bird \(2010\)](#) have several things to say about the celebration of Thanksgiving in the USA: *(plus additional comments from the victim-blaming perspective in bold and italic between parentheses)*

- They promote the national glorification of what a “provident God” has given them *(so, according to this, the “Americans” have not taken any land from anybody; it was given to them by their God. Thus, they are “innocent.”)*
- They are genocide-silencing commemorations *(since the violent conquest, genocide, and subsequent oppression are not mentioned, then “it must not have happened.” Thus, the victims are silenced).*
- They undermine support for reparative action *(back then the victims had it all taken away from them, and now they still get nothing. Victims get victimised again and again).*
- They foster the reproduction of silence *(this is also a part of their revictimization).*

[Cortina and Magley \(2003\)](#) describe some of the ways victims of interpersonal mistreatment in the workplace are silenced, or forced to pay the price of speaking up, after being victimised. In cases where victims voice their resistance to the abuse, there may be what they called *social retaliation victimization*, which could include threats, name-calling, and ostracism. In what they named *work relation victimization*, victims may be fired, transferred against their will, demoted, undeservedly receive bad performance reports, and so on. And, continuing the “no matter what you do you lose” theme, when victims remain silent, on account of their fear of retaliation, they may suffer reductions in self-esteem, feel excluded, experience anxiety or depression, or become ill, among other possibilities. No matter what, the victims are revictimized, and the perpetrators continue to do their harm, quite safely.

**While “on the job,” here is an example of a *victim-blaming* workplace scenario:**

“**Mary A.**” despite multiple incidents of sexual harassment during her studies, she anyway managed to finish a degree in engineering. She lands what she considers to

be an enviable position at a firm that has a “progressive” reputation, and feels that she finally reached the culmination of so much work and anguish. But...

*Day one, on the job, for “Mary A.”*

*After a busy morning, Mary A. goes into the kitchenette in her department, for a quick cup of tea, while John A. walks in immediately after her. Here is a hypothetical dialogue within this hypothetical example:*

**John A.:** Hi, I’m John. You’re new here, right?

**Mary A.:** Hi, yes, I am Mary. It’s my first day.

**John:** We are a great bunch of people here in this department. We work hard, but we also like to *play* hard.

**Mary:** Oh, okay...

**John:** You know, we don’t have too many *girl* engineers around here, and I certainly can’t remember any as *beautiful* as you are. I can be a pretty *fun* guy to be around, and can show you all the trendy places around town, you know. What are you doing after work?

**Mary:** Uh, well, I was hoping to concentrate on my work.

**John:** Yeah, but you also have to relax and have *fun*, right? How about a *drink* after work; there is a great “Mexican” place nearby with a really *cool* “*happy hour*.”

**Mary:** No, but thanks.

**John:** What’s the problem, are you one of *those*?

**Mary:** One of *what*?

**John:** Oh forget it! You won’t last long around here with *that* attitude! I was only trying to be *friendly*, and look how *you* react!

Later...John tells “*the guys*” that Mary is a *rude* and *antisocial* “*lesbian bitch*” that really needs to take a “*chill pill*”<sup>187</sup>. Through language and shared *otherling* ideologies, John, with just a few words, could do devastating harm to Mary. To him, females should not be allowed to make their own decisions, so he will try to make her pay for not doing what he wanted.

Meanwhile, Mary wonders what’s coming next. From John, or others on the job. She asks herself if she should mention this to the appropriate department, or to her supervisor, while

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<sup>187</sup> To suggest to another person to take a “*chill pill*” is a rude way of telling them that they have to “relax.” Used especially to *other* a person, by making the victim out to be unreasonably upset. Used, for instance, after an “innocent,” but wholly inappropriate, sexual remark.

also considering the possible consequences of starting to “*complain*” her very first day. No matter what she does or does not do, why must she have to live in fear of such “must lose” scenarios in the first place?

From the *victim-blaming* perspective:

1) *Whatever happened was partially or fully the victim’s fault*: Mary is “beautiful,” so she provoked a “flattering” comment. She chose a “man’s” profession, “at her own risk.”

2) *Any perpetrators are not guilty, or in the worst case partly so*: John was “just being friendly” and “did not mean any harm.” And as the old and very tired cliché goes, “you can’t fault a guy for trying<sup>188</sup>.”

3) *Victims tend to get revictimized*: Mary “has no sense of camaraderie,” “hates fun,” is “ungrateful,” and is then even slandered by her colleague. Not to mention that she now feels ill at ease on the job. And really not to mention all she went through to get to this “dream job” in the first place, and now she has to tip toe on eggshells?

Now, “at home:”

[Guerin and de Oliveira Ortolan \(2017\)](#) expound that in order to analyse *domestic violence*, what many consider to be “private” or “intimate” matters must be evaluated from a broader social and political context. They conclude that *domestic violence* is enabled and facilitated by the *patriarchal and capitalist established order*. They enumerate many of the commonly seen abusive male behaviours, and the consequences on females as seen through the societal and cultural perspectives. Many of these have to do with “keeping secrets,” especially those related to the abuse inflicted upon the victim. They highlight the principal mechanisms males use to *control* and *subjugate* the females they are perpetrating *domestic violence* against, including:

- Economic abuse (taking her money, denying her access to household income, etc.)
- Coercion and threats (forcing her to drop any charges, threatening to spread lies, etc.)
- Intimidation (abuse of pets, brandishing of weapons, etc.)
- Emotional abuse (making her feel unjustifiably guilty, gaslighting, etc.)
- Isolation (controlling what she does, who she sees, etc.)

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<sup>188</sup> Actually, this can be questioned, and should be more often.

- Minimizing, denying, and blaming (downplaying the significance of the abuse he is perpetrating, shifting the blame to her, etc.)
- Using children (using visitation to harass her, taking the children away, etc.)
- Male privilege (treating her like a servant, unilaterally determining which gender does what, making all the big decisions without consulting her, etc.)

In each of these instances the victim's voice is *silenced*, meaning females are not only victimised by domestic violence, but are *revictimized* because they can't do anything about it.

#### 3.10.4: Conclusions for *victim blaming*:

In this example, several manifestations of the deleterious real-life consequences of the pervasive *victim-blaming* ideology were presented. A recurring theme was that all oppression, othering, and victimisation are related. Several oppressed and victimised groups were again highlighted, from the *victim-blaming* viewpoint, including:

- *non-human animals* (*speciesism*)
- *females* (*sexism*)
- *Hispanics* (*racism, xenophobia, chauvinism, colonialism, etc.*)
- *Native Americans* (*racism, colonialism, etc.*)

It was demonstrated that *victim blaming* is enforced primarily through three mechanisms, namely:

- To make it appear as if whatever happened was partially or fully the victim's fault.
- To make it seem that any perpetrators are not guilty, or in the worst case only partly so.
- The repeated victimisation of victims.

An inclusive and bias-free dictionary would be a new kind of lexicon; one in which bias and exclusion are identified, described, and illustrated, so lexicographers should benefit from the added insight of the real-life scenarios and explanations here presented. These can be a part of helping them to shape a less biased and more inclusive reality through their work. In addition, such texts, fictional or otherwise, may be incorporated within bias-free and

inclusive usage dictionaries, similarly to the way general English dictionaries may have a section on sample personal and business correspondence, dialogue for hypothetical “everyday” conversational settings, and the like. Seeing things “in action” helps many people to “put it all together” in the proper perspective.

When critically observed, where treating other people with regard and fairness is concerned, it is clear to see that not much has changed in society over these past decades, or even centuries. *Victim blaming* plays an indispensable part in this, yet none of the twelve dictionaries here evaluated has it listed as a lemma. In this manner, these lexicons are also complicit, in a way, in the continuance of the *victim-blaming* ideology our culture and society suffer from.

Lexicography should play a decisive role in addressing bias and exclusion problems from the *inside*. After all, it is the lexicographers who are providing the paraphrases of meaning. In order to eradicate the bias and exclusion in these lexicons, it will be necessary for lexicographers to see things through the “eyes” of the “beast” of oppression, *and* those of the victims, with the interests of the latter in mind.

Where fear, hate, violence, and oppression are concerned, everything is interrelated. Bias-free and inclusive usage dictionaries will be essential resources to those who wish to make meaningful positive contributions, be it through critical discourse analysis, critical race theory, discourse psychology, intersectionality, critical reality awareness, or in any way they choose.



### 3.11: Example Six: *policing of masculinity*.

As mentioned, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature three types of lemmas, one of which would be those that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, fear, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. A prime instance of this is *policing of masculinity*.

As the basis of all othering and oppression, *patriarchy* has already been defined, described, and amply illustrated in this dissertation. The othering and gendering of non-human animals, and their links to the oppression of human females, along with the concomitant violence, exploitation, vilification, and subjugation have also been explained. And, as also mentioned, *patriarchy* cannot function without the *gender binary*.

In order to remain as such, all toxic “traditional ways” are dependent, quite simply, on two things: an *existing oppressive* established order, and the *forced maintenance* of said order. Patriarchal cultures and societies too depend on an ignoble duo, namely:

- *hegemonic masculinity*, and the
- *gender binary*, enforced mainly through the *policing of masculinity*.

#### 3.11.1: Paraphrases of meaning for *gender binary*, *hegemonic masculinity*, and *policing of masculinity*.

##### **Gender binary:**

*gender binary* - The cataloguing of all humans into two mutually-exclusive *genders*; a determination based on the visible genitalia at birth. Once assigned, there is the expectation that a person will then “be” either female or male, the expression of which is determined by prevailing social and cultural norms. That is, a person must comply with a *gender role*, as opposed to following their own *gender identity*.

Patriarchy cannot function without the *gender binary*, since the males cannot subjugate and oppress the females if they can’t be sure of “who” is “what.” For patriarchs, anything other than male or female, including that which may be ambiguous in any fashion, is “wrong” and must be punished and preferably eradicated, “for their own good and that of society.” The gender binary incorporates

heteronormativity and the heterosexual imaginary, and is enforced through gender policing, especially *policing of masculinity*.

### **Hegemonic masculinity:**

[Smith, Parrott, Swartout and Tharp \(2015:161\)](#) state that:

*“hegemonic masculinity refers to the normative ideology that to be a man is to be dominant in society and that the subordination of women is required to maintain such power.”*

### **Policing of masculinity:**

*policing of masculinity (POM)* - the observation and regulation of the activities, conduct, and expression of those perceived to be males, in order to ensure compliance with masculine gender-role norms within the gender binary. Desired behaviours and mindsets may include homophobic manifestations, aggressiveness, disregard for others (extending as well to animals and nature in general), competitiveness including “winning at any cost,” combativeness, arrogance, heedless risk-taking including reckless driving and “overindulgence” of alcohol, violence, bullying, sexual pursuit, relational aggression, and any kind of misogynistic attitudes or acts including sexual harassment and rape. Any person, regardless of gender, can perpetrate POM, and enforcement measures may include (depending on the respective power relations and settings of any “forbidden” deeds) disapproving gestures, critical comments, strong reprimands, ostracising, ridicule, harassment, and/or physical violence up to and including murder. Self-POM is also employed to gain and/or maintain “status” as a “normative male” among “peers,” parents, teachers, and anyone else monitoring. Similarly to races, genders are a social and cultural construct. The end result of POM is to maintain the patriarchal established order of male hegemony, at the expense of females and the environment. Also called *masculinity policing*.

On account of *policing of masculinity* embodying so many of the deleterious manifestations of *patriarchy*, *male hegemony*, and the *gender binary*, this article has a rather detailed paraphrase of meaning. Since *policing of masculinity* mandates so many expressions of toxic conduct, a generous sample of such behaviours is given, so that users can get an authentic feel for the concept. A bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary should capably describe and illustrate where the bias and exclusion are, and some lemmas will especially benefit from

extended treatment. An equivalent expression is provided at the end of the article, to facilitate its recognition, and for using that one if desired. Please refer to Chapters Four and Five for a full analysis on the users, and on the article structure (and much more) of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, respectively.

Considering how specialised the expression *policing of masculinity* is, it is not surprising that none of the general English dictionaries here considered included this lemma. Same goes, of course, for the equivalent *masculinity policing*. The expression *hegemonic masculinity* is seen much more frequently, but was also not included in any of the examined lexicons either. It is worth noting, however, that one of the twelve *did* provide a paraphrase of meaning for *gender binary*.

*The Random House Unabridged Dictionary*<sup>189</sup>:

- 1 “a classification system consisting of two genders, male and female.”
- 2 “concept or belief that there are only two genders and that one’s biological or birth gender will align with traditional social constructs of masculine and feminine identity, expression, and sexuality.”

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun. There are no example sentences.

### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

This is an exemplary paraphrase of meaning for a general English dictionary (or for any lexicon for that matter). We will focus on *sense 2*:

- The use of the words “concept or belief that there are only two genders” alerts users to the assumptive and arbitrary nature of this notion.
- “that one’s biological or birth gender will align with traditional social constructs” drives this *fabricated* point home very effectively.
- And, to nicely round out the paraphrase of meaning, “masculine and feminine identity, expression, and sexuality” encompasses three of the most significant aspects related to having a sense of agency in one’s life.

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<sup>189</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190219212727/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/gender-binary?s=t>

Not only was *Random House* the only publisher in this group to cover this expression, they also performed an outstanding job while they were at it!

### 3.11.2: A brief look at the literature, for *policing of masculinity*.

A great deal of the harm and destruction that goes on around us, on a personal, institutional, social, and worldwide level can be traced to *policing of masculinity*. In a “chilling” example of how *policing of masculinity*, like all indoctrination, starts “best” early in life, we have the following:

In a scholarly article detailing the *grammar of patriarchy* ([Peltonen, Lindman, and Nyman, 2017:7](#)), one of the authors shares a very unpleasant lesson on the workings of a *male-centred society*: (*The text is presented verbatim as it appears in the article; certain key words have been bolded*).

*“Sara: I am playing a board game with my **family** (my **partner** and our **two kids**) on a nice Saturday evening when we are all gathered together, I lose. No big deal really, but then my **four-year-old son** looks at me with **spite** and **concludes loudly**:”*

*“Mummy lost because she has a **pussy**, I and **Daddy** won!”*

*“**I freeze**.”*

*“I’ve brought a **monster** into this world.”*

*“Then I of course try to explain that **girls** can do the same things as **boys**, that boys can do the same things as girls, and that it has nothing to do with my **pussy** that I lost. He nods and says he understands, but I can see in his eyes that he’s confused. As if I was claiming that blue is red or that tomorrow is today. Feminist questions do not only concern, in this case, a feminist (me) clinically studying how “**socialisation is gendered**”. In this case it’s only about me understanding that my child is **learning to despise women**.”*

In this short vignette, Sara went from “*just loving that family life*” to “*what have I gotten myself into?*” Whether they realise it or not, all females<sup>190</sup> are always an instant away from learning the true meaning and real-life consequences of being a part of a *male-centred* society and culture. The indoctrination of her four-year old son not only started early on, but was

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<sup>190</sup> Along with members of other oppressed groups, such as “non-whites.”

already ominously effective. He was unlikely to know what a “*pussy*” really is, and he most certainly was not aware of the dehumanising and objectifying nature of the word in the context within which he blurted it out. Yet, he *spitefully* articulated the connection he was taught to make: males are better in every way, including winning games, and females are worse in every way, including losing games. He was brainwashed to believe that “anyone with a pussy” is to be contemptuously vilified and subjugated. Beyond that, he apparently was already on the way to incorporating that “winning is all that matters” mentality and not caring about the feelings of other people, among other “trademark” patriarchal traits that are fostered through the *policing of masculinity*.

This young boy was already showing promise to become a “good soldier,” that is, one who does not think, and whose only mission is to blindly obey. In so denigrating a female, his own mother in this case, the *policing of his masculinity* has been efficacious, and properly displayed for others to see:

- for the males (to get and keep their approval, starting with “*Big Daddy*”<sup>191</sup>,”) and
- for the females (to remind them of their place; inferior to males).

In referring to her son as a “monster,” she likely meant that despite her being a feminist, that she nonetheless has provided the world, awfully ironically, with yet another *patriarch*. In addition, her other child, regardless of gender, received another “lesson in patriarchy” thanks to this unfortunate incident.

A four-year-old kid might be “excused” for his ignorance. But, what justification do older children and adults have for oppressing others? As far as *patriarchy* and *policing of masculinity* are concerned, males can and should oppress females through language and other overt actions, the significance of which they themselves do not necessarily have to understand. They nonetheless know quite well what they are doing, but then, *boys will be boys* (“wink wink.”)

Speaking of *boys will be boys*, earlier in this chapter we saw how the *boys will be boys/policing of masculinity* twosome fosters an uncaring, exploitative, and destructive perspective on nature, as [Blenkinsop, Piersol, & Sitka-Sage \(2017\)](#) showed in their study, within a scholastic setting, how:

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<sup>191</sup> [Solanas \(1968\)](#) referred to the embodiment of patriarchy as “*Big Daddy*.”

- Some boys police the masculinity of all the other boys.
- Any boys demonstrating an affinity for animals or nature in general were not considered to be “masculine enough.”
- These “non-conforming” boys were faced with a hard choice: either to continue to exhibit their caring attitude for the natural world, or not to:
  - If they continued to “care,” they would get to “discover the pain, violence, and cultural responses.”
  - If they betrayed themselves (and nature), they *might* be accepted, but would be unhappy (and anyway “flagged” for some other *policing of masculinity* “violation.”)

Either way, they, and nature lose. In the meantime, parents, teachers, and other adults just “brush off” the policing and violence as “*boys being boys*.”

[Bauermeister, Connochie, Jadwin-Cakmak and Meanley \(2017\)](#) underline how *hegemonic masculinity* and *parental gender policing* are harmful to “sexual minority” men during their childhood, making the following observations:

- *Gender policing* by parents was associated with substance abuse (alcohol, tobacco and other drugs) and *psychological distress* including depression and anxiety.
- The more frequent and harsher the disciplinary actions on the part of the parents, the greater these deleterious effects.
- The indoctrination of the forced observance of *gender-conforming behaviour* starts early in life, and the harmful effects can extend to adulthood.
- Examples of the gender policing included:
  - counselling against their will
  - religious interventions forced upon them
  - restriction of activities that may have led to non-conforming behaviours
  - forced participation in “traditionally-masculine” activities
  - verbal abuse
  - physical abuse
  - parental “coaching” encouraging boys to police their own behaviour, so as to “reduce the discomfort of others.”

With this kind of “parenting,” substance abuse and psychological distress are regrettably unsurprising outcomes.

[Reigeluth & Addis \(2016\)](#) put the spotlight on how the *boys will be boys mindset* serves as a mechanism for the *policing of masculinity*. In their study, they found that “non-conforming” boys were insulted with misogynistic and homophobic insults, such as “*bitch*,” “*pussy*,” and “*fag*,” among other compliance measures.

In such a scenario, *every* teenage boy had to live in fear and anxiety, because:

- All the boys were being policed.
- Boys that “did not” measure up were attacked with insults.
- Boys that “did” measure up anyway had to continue to prove how “masculine” they were, through *self-POM*.

The result was the fostering of *hegemonic masculinity*, with its *misogynistic* and *homophobic* consequences. An integral part of the *boys will be boys mindset* is the *policing of masculinity*.

[Smith, Parrott, Swartout and Tharp \(2015\)](#) highlight that research shows that men who believe in *hegemonic masculinity* and act accordingly, are likelier to perpetrate *sexual violence* against women. They also posit that one of the tactics for enforcing their dominance as men over women is through *sexual aggression*.

In Chapter Two, [Calvo \(2008\)](#) described how “caricatures of masculinity” (men) working in slaughterhouses reaffirm how macho they are (*self-POM* to maintain status with their peers) through:

- the butchering and segmenting of animals (*thus showing each other how violent they can be*)
- the manner in which they prodded the animals on with gendered epithets, such as *cunt* and *bitch* (*they reaffirm their “manliness” to themselves and other males through the use of such epithets*)
- the human dominance over non-human animals, which she identified as a *male* thing (*they are showing who the “boss” is; always males*)
- a callous disregard for the life and suffering of animals, which even enjoys a certain “macho appeal” among young men (*since “real men” show no emotions nor mercy*).

The Ramírez murder described by [Johnson and Ingram \(2012\)](#) in Chapter Two may also be analysed through the lens of *policing of masculinity*, including:



- how white males on the same sports team “vanquish” any opponents (especially when ganging up on a single “foreigner”)
- their being “on the prowl” after drinking and fighting at a party (“real men” do such things)
- how they each tried to outdo each other in their murderous sadism and violence, to prove how “manly” they were to themselves and each other
- how they threatened a “non-complying” woman with death (a woman did not submit to them, and to them females have no autonomy, so they must obey “mighty white men”)
- their use of language such as “*fucking Spic*,” “*fucking Mexican*,” “*fuck you Spic*,” and “*go home, you Mexican motherfucker*,” to intimidate their victim and further assert their macho authority.

[Kimmel \(2004\)](#) has a great deal to say about “*masculinity*” as *homophobia* including:

- Most people think of *manhood* as something a person either has or has not, based on biology. If, for instance, a person has a penis, then said person is identified as a man.
- Quite to the contrary, he defines *manhood* as social construct whose “definition” varies over time, as arbitrarily set by our culture.
- He states: “*Our behaviors are not simply ‘just human nature,’ because ‘boys will be boys.’ From the materials we find around us in our culture—other people, ideas, objects—we actively create our worlds, our identities. Men, both individually and collectively, can change.*” ([Kimmel, 2004:183](#))
- In the [US] American culture, *masculinity* is characterised by fear, aggression competition, and anxiety.
- The might of *hegemonic masculinity* is defined by the men who have the *power*, and as such they resolve that “manhood” means having *power*. And these *definitions* maintain the *power structure*.
- Kimmel asserts that *homophobia* is a manifestation of *masculinity*, driven by *fear*.
- He goes on to state that a “pre-oedipal<sup>192</sup> boy identifies with his mother, and he sees his father with awe, wonder, terror *and desire*.” (Italicised in the original text). ([Kimmel, 2004:185](#)) So, the boy must suppress this desire. Therefore, his *homophobia* is the *suppression of any desire for any other men*.
- This puts all men in a preposterous position: they are afraid of all other men, and at the same time vie for their approval. They will then do *anything* to avoid being called *sissy*, *uncool*, *untough*, among other infantile appellations.

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<sup>192</sup> As per the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*; “**Oedipus complex** - according to Freudian psychology, when a son unconsciously feels sexual desire for his mother, combined with a hatred for his father.” Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190304153844/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/oedipus-complex>



- Anything and everything a male does is subject to *gender policing*: how they talk, eat, walk, dress, speak, behave, and so on, since everything has its *coded gender language*. The *fear* of males to be perceived as *homosexuals* compels them to go overboard to “guarantee” that they will be seen as “macho” enough.

In a case of quite literal *policing* of masculinity, [Bykov \(2014\)](#) cites an example of a police training academy that used episodes of a TV show called “COPS<sup>193</sup>,” filled with “lessons” in *hegemonic masculinity* and *racism* “to teach recruits.” She goes on to highlight a scene in which words like *bitch* and *pussy* are used by a male *domestic violence perpetrator*, as an example of the indoctrination of *female* trainees into the *hyper-masculine mindsets of police organisations*. For anybody watching the show, there are additional messages, such as:

- Males learn more about how they might treat females.
- Females learn more about how they might be treated (by males *or females* in power).
- Figures of authority might keep females in place using specific denigrating vocabulary.
- Such language use in such scenarios helps define *females* as *passive victims*.
- Such language use in such scenarios helps define *males* as *active perpetrators*. Although being a perpetrator of violence should be considered a depraved thing, in the context of *policing of masculinity* it is “empowering” and “status enhancing.”

As here demonstrated, *policing of masculinity* is an unfortunate yet integral part of the lives of every person, whether they realise it or not. Many are aware of it, most “playing along,” while others resist. In any case, this expression to date is encountered mostly only in the relevant literature, and as mentioned, is not present in any of the main general English dictionaries. An intelligent and educated person might be able to make a reasonable guess at what *policing of masculinity* means, but many people will want to look up this kind of expression to obtain not just the precise meaning, but to also garner additional insight. Including such lemmas is another way that bias-free and inclusive usage dictionaries will be of immense utility to its users.

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<sup>193</sup> A popular USA “reality police show.”

### 3.11.3: *Policing of masculinity as an example of an expression arising organically, next level research, and more ways lexicographers better serve dictionary users.*

Most realms of expertise have what might be called their own “lingo,” which to many people outside that given field may not be comprehensible. Employment of lingo, jargon, argot, and cant is usually meant to keep others out, confuse, or baffle, as is often seen with *legal jargon* ([Busk & Braem, 2016](#)), ([Charge \(2016\)](#)), and ([Yeo, 2018](#)), among many others.

But, the last thing researchers and scholars investigating and exposing the injustices of society want to do is exclude or perplex. However, they work diligently in their respective “frequency band” within the hate/intolerance/violence spectrum (be that in linguistics, sociology, education, gender, racial, or multicultural studies, and so on), and are not necessarily checking to see which expressions are used for what “above and below” said bands.

As scholars, many contributors to the literature want to be as precise as possible in identifying the key concepts they work with, but this might lead to incorporating numerous expressions that are not yet utilised commonly enough to be immediately recognised and understood by colleagues working in other fields of expertise, and perhaps not even by those within their own realm (not to mention non-specialists).

Nonetheless, they are probably aware that in order to help effect a change, that the terminology that they employ needs to be understood not just by the colleagues they meet in the conferences and on campus, but also by those who are working in diverse areas of bias and exclusion. And beyond them, by anyone who cares about these matters and also wants to help improve things.

They are focused on identifying timely issues, performing quality research, and sharing the fruits of their labour through journals, books, blogs, and the like. They are not ordinarily concerned with connecting words with their paraphrases of meaning, nor to linking concepts with specific expressions, or to helping to standardise usage, and so on. This is all fine, as they are not lexicographers.

So, what can lexicographers do to help with the understanding and propagation of these words and expressions? They can closely examine the literature, locate them, provide paraphrases of meaning for them based on their current usage, and present the terminology together in one convenient and elegant package.

Most academics, scholars, students, and others understand that in order to eradicate social problems these must first be identified and then exposed. If they were to have a lexicon with precisely defined words and expressions as they are currently utilised in the relevant literature, they would be able to save time and effort, making for happy users which then are more productive researchers. There will be much more on dictionary users in Chapter Four, and on the structures of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries in Chapter Five.

The mutually equivalent expressions *policing of masculinity* and *masculinity policing* also provide an opportunity to comment on terminology that arises organically in the literature. In what might be called *next level research*, investigative tools (in this case lexicographical sources of information) will help researchers in general to work better individually and collectively:

**next level research** - Research in which work time is spent manifesting investigative prowess and imagination. This is accomplished mainly through the identification and elimination of any and all barriers, along with the enhancement of communication and collaboration between researchers. Obstacles to be removed include those that are technology based, such as slow connections, unreliable hardware, and applications and programs that waste users' time by being unintuitive, not providing what is needed, having a cluttered interface, not synchronising in real time, and so on. Enhancements include immediate access to a full spectrum of investigative tools including reliable lexicographical sources of information, seamless cooperation between researchers whether they communicate directly or not, an emphasis on critical thinking and research skills in curricula, and resources that work effectively across multiple languages. Finally, it is research where there is an awareness that everything is interrelated, a desire to make meaningful positive contributions, and a commitment to further an inclusive society.

As writers of the most authoritative and trusted language reference books (and for many people, *the* most reliable sources of information), lexicographers are in a position to make any number of meaningful contributions. This can again be illustrated by using *policing of masculinity/masculinity policing* as an example.

Myriad books and articles (scholarly and otherwise) describe specific instances where *policing of masculinity/masculinity policing* occurs, along with the consequences, yet neither *policing of masculinity* nor *masculinity policing* appear anywhere in the text, or as *keywords*. If the authors were aware of the existence of these expressions they would likely utilise them. Since

most are not using them, however, others exploring this topic might not even locate these germane books and articles. As mentioned, lexicographers can help by finding and defining the relevant lemmas based on their use in the literature. It's a part of what they do.

Here is an illustration of how beneficial these lexicographical contributions can be:

- Expressions are identified and incorporated as lemmas, which are therefore able to be found.
- Since these expressions are found, they are then in a position to be utilised.
- As a consequence of expressions being utilised, their use becomes more widespread.
- As they continue to be circulated, expressions become standardised.
- As expressions become standardised, they make for an immediate and full understanding.
- As a result, researchers spend more time on research, and less on figuring out what the others are talking about, since they are now sharing a common terminology.
- This is a part of the *next-level research* synergy described earlier. This synergy means that everyone provides an even more useful output.
- If the researchers can so benefit, then so will those accessing said literature.
- Society as a whole benefits.

To see this in action, here is an instance where high quality research touches upon matters directly related to *policing of masculinity/masculinity policing*, yet neither expression is mentioned:

As the title implies, in *Longitudinal Associations Among Bullying, Homophobic Teasing, and Sexual Violence Perpetration Among Middle School Students* ([Espelage, Basile, De La Rue, & Hamburger \(2015\)](#)), the authors link behaviours including bullying, homophobic teasing, and sexual violence. They study some of the destructive behaviours of adolescent boys, and provide paraphrases of meaning for *bullying*, *sexual harassment*, and *homophobic teasing*, which is indicative of how important *clarity of terminology* is to them. In their article, though, they specify only three keywords: *bullying*, *sexual harassment*, and *adolescents*.

Despite *homophobic teasing* being defined in their text, and *hegemonic masculinity* being utilised multiple times, to name a couple of relevant expressions, they did not include these as keywords. They make reference over and over to several hallmark manifestations of *policing of masculinity*, including three key ones right there in the title of the article. [Reigeluth & Addis \(2016\)](#) and [Dalley-Trim \(2009\)](#) show that *bullying* and *homophobic teasing* represent concepts typically forming a part of *policing of masculinity*, while [Woods \(2017\)](#) demonstrates the same for the role *sexual violence* plays.

An investigator looking into *policing of masculinity* (same for *masculinity policing*, of course) would not find this article based on these *keywords* or even a *text search* for these expressions. Since *policing of masculinity* does not occur in a vacuum, many researchers might be interested in how this article deals with this and related matters. If *policing of masculinity* or *masculinity policing* were in the text or specified as *keywords*, then teachers, administrators, writers of textbooks, journalists, legislators, and others would have another resource to help make schools and streets safer places for everyone. In *next level research*, there would be an understanding that everything is interrelated, and that the desired information should be able to be found quickly and easily. In this case, the precise terminology would facilitate matters for all concerned.

As mentioned at the start of this Chapter, the main way that *hegemonic masculinity* (a keyword in the [Espelage, Basile, De La Rue, & Hamburger \(2015\)](#) article) is maintained is through the *policing of masculinity* ([Reigeluth & Addis, 2016](#)). Despite the conceptual and ideological similarity of these expressions, language corpora and lexicographical technology may not detect how interrelated these expressions actually are. Capable human lexicographers are still needed to make these more subtle correlations between concepts. Although the alphabetisation of lemmas will be addressed in Chapter Five of this dissertation, it is worth noting now that the connection between these expressions becomes readily apparent by offering lemmas in both their “natural” form, as in *hegemonic masculinity*, and also by *keywords*, as in *masculinity*, *hegemonic*. Please observe an example of this in the following frame:

- masculinity, hegemonic** – the dominance of stereotypical male traits, such as aggression, ambition...
- masculinity, military** – the glorification of violence, misogyny, rape, and destruction within...
- masculinity policing** – the observation and regulation of the activities, conduct, and expression of...
- masculinity studies** – an interdisciplinary field which critically analyses what it purportedly means...

Looking up any of these expressions helps to better conceptualise what a user is reading or hearing about, since adjacent expressions are nearby for immediate correlation. And, if so desired, these nearby articles may be read and compared to gain an even deeper understanding.

If the dictionary is also enjoyable to read and well written, then such excursions will be encouraged and rewarded. It's all connected, and lexicographers can help make the links ever more apparent.

### 3.11.4: Conclusions for *policing of masculinity*.

As inhabitants of this planet, hominids<sup>194</sup> were and are provided with everything and more than could possibly be needed. Up until our nomadic hunting-and-gathering stage we lived in harmony with nature. Fast forwarding to our current epoch, *patriarchy was created*, with the concomitant unrestrained devastation of our shared environment. Not satisfied with *othering* and *exploiting nature*, *patriarchy* went on to also *vilify* and *oppress females*, and ultimately all “non-conforming” males, non-whites, “foreigners,” and on and on.

*Patriarchs* very much enjoy the power being at the top provides, so as far as they are concerned, this *established order must* be maintained. In order for this *hegemonic masculinity* to continue to prosper, there must be the continuance of the *gender binary*, which itself is enforced mostly through the *policing of masculinity*. Paraphrases of meaning were provided for these latter three fundamental expressions.

In this chapter many of the mechanisms, manifestations, and destructive consequences of *policing of masculinity* were identified and illustrated, vivid and relevant examples were provided, and it was concluded that *policing of masculinity* makes life unbearable for everybody. It's agonising even for “conforming” males, since most of their lives are spent in fear of being discovered to be “insufficiently masculine.” The connectedness of *fear*, *hate*, *violence*, and *oppression* was again highlighted, as manifested through the *policing of masculinity*. [Kimmel \(2004\)](#) provided indispensable insight into how the *social construct of masculinity* works: as a manifestation of *homophobia*.

Those that are deemed to not being “real men” are denigrated and othered with epithets such as *fag*, *pussy*, *bitch*, *sissy*, *wimp*, and *mama's boy*. This verbal abuse is often combined with

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<sup>194</sup> Hominids encompass current humans, along with all our evolutionary progenitors all the way back to the common ancestor for all the great apes. Humans, gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans are the extant great apes.

physical violence, and many times results in rape or murder. Males, for instance, may gang-rape one or more females to prove to themselves and others that they are “real men,” while in other cases “non-conforming” males may be beaten, raped, or killed.

There was also a look at *next-level research*, providing several instances where the expression *policing of masculinity* itself served as an example of even more ways in which lexicographers play such an important role in the reduction of biased and exclusive usage. There is plenty going on in the world of exclusion and oppression, and it is up to the lexicographers to identify, define, and illustrate the relevant words and expressions that expose and explain what is going on. *Policing of masculinity* is all-pervasive, and serves as an example of the kind of expression that users of inclusive expression and bias-free usage dictionaries need to be aware of.

*Patriarchy* is all about the men in power keeping their supremacy, and all that might is constantly abused. These men in power violently enforce their obsession to own, control, and decide everything, by denying all others their freedom and autonomy. *Females* and “non-compliant” males are deprived of their right to be themselves. They are not allowed to make choices based on their own needs and desires, and are subjected to mental and physical abuse.

As also seen, our culture and society currently determine that “real men” (be they males, or females who want to have the power and control over others, similar to the way that males have) are aggressive, arrogant, combative, vanquishing, and “winners” at any cost who don’t have the slightest concern for those who are “annihilated.”

On an international scale, this “masculinity,” is often manifested as the abuse of greater military strength to take the land and/or resources that belong to those that are deemed “weaker” (and therefore “lesser” and “undeserving,”) along with subjugating and exploiting their people. Since as far as the perpetrators of the murdering, raping, plundering, and oppression are concerned, if there were “real macho men” in the victimised countries and regions, they would do what “real virile men” do, which is to defend their land, women, children, and animals. Of course, the cowardly invaders and looters only “fulfil their destiny” (often as determined by “their God”) at the expense of those they feel certain to be able to defeat and keep down.

As has been clearly evidenced here, *policing of masculinity* makes life an agony for *everyone*:

- for the “real men” who are in constant fear of being unmasked as a fraud, and
- for their victims, who are all the othered and oppressed groups: the rest of the males (including sexual/racial “minorities,” “foreigners,” etc.), and all females.

All this to avoid being seen as *effeminate*? How much death, destruction, and oppression might have been (and continue to be) avoided if these “masculine men” had allowed themselves and other males to manifest “stereotypically feminine” traits such as regard, tolerance, compassion, empathy, nurturance, caring, generosity, peacefulness, tenderness, and communicativeness, along with any homoerotic desires they may have had? Without *patriarchy* and all it entails, we (and all non-human animals, the environment, and nature in general) might still have our harmonious, bountiful, and natural existence.



### 3.12: Example Seven, *drama queen*.

As stated several times in this dissertation, a persistent theme within bias and exclusion is that what is *supposed to be* or *expected* in reality means that which is *required*. Anything less than what is demanded by *patriarchy*, *heteronormativity*, *heterosexism*, *gender roles*, *capitalistic values*, and *religious dogma*, among other cultural traditions and practices, continues to *other* and cause endless misery.

The behaviour of all females *and* to a certain extent all males<sup>195</sup> is, to a monumental extent, dictated by these mandates. Although the English language has been, and continues to be, an essential weapon for the vilification and oppression of females in our society, in *drama queen* many males are also thrown into the pestilent concoction leading to *othering*.

[Waldron \(2011\)](#) asserts that being a *drama queen* is a part of what *normative femininity* entails. Among other traits, females are supposed to be (and therefore *required* to be) characterised by being:

- passive
- submissive
- *emotional*
- domestic, and
- conforming to beauty as defined by heterosexual desirability.

As will be seen by the paraphrases of meaning the general English dictionaries provide, being *emotional* is also a shared theme in the portrayal of a *drama queen*, including wording such as:

- excessively emotional
- overdramatic or exaggerated
- unnecessarily dramatic, and
- overly emotional

Equipped with this additional insight, here are the analyses of the paraphrases of meaning provided by the twelve general English dictionaries being here examined.

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<sup>195</sup> More on this theme in the *policing of masculinity* example, explored in the previous section of this chapter,

### 3.12.1: The *Oxford Living Dictionaries online British & World English dictionary*<sup>196</sup>:

*“A person who habitually responds to situations in a melodramatic way.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and labelled as used informally. The paraphrase of meaning in their *US English Dictionary* is identical. There are example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

This is a clear and concise paraphrase of meaning that at first blush does not appear to incorporate any bias. *Oxford* did not specify that the expression applies only to males or only to females, or even that one gender or the other is more often linked with the expression. So, the paraphrase of meaning *appears* to be unbiased in that regard.

Yet, the word *queen* is probably associated with *females*, and also with *homoerotic males*, as per one of the senses within their own paraphrase of meaning of *queen*, which states: “a homosexual man<sup>197</sup>, especially one regarded as ostentatiously effeminate.” So, even before looking up ***drama queen***, a user may have images of these groups of people who are often so uncritically associated with acting “overly emotional and dramatic.” So, it’s not just “any person” being excessively emotional, as their paraphrase of meaning would imply. It *could* be anyone, but, in using this expression, all females and many males are likelier to be unnecessarily vilified. This disparagement is not mentioned in the paraphrase of meaning, nor is it revealed in a usage note. They did not even include an “*offensive*” (nor anything like this) in the labelling of the lemma.

Beyond this, the *Oxford* lexicographers did not mention that there is no such thing as a ***drama king*** utilised in a corresponding manner. The expression ***drama king*** is not listed in this or any of the dictionaries scrutinised here<sup>198</sup>. It might be “too obvious” to list this expression, since “everyone” knows that the “king” of something is the “best<sup>199</sup>.” Along these lines, if a person were to be called a ***drama king***, that would likely be taken as a compliment, since it would confer a level of skill and/or fame that few attain.

<sup>196</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190214210441/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/drama\\_queen](https://web.archive.org/web/20190214210441/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/drama_queen)

<sup>197</sup> In this case, *men*, of course.

<sup>198</sup> Obviously, but that anyway needed to be verified, just in case.

<sup>199</sup> That too, is biased, but that is another matter.

When a person looks up any given expression in a dictionary, they will have varying degrees of knowledge about the component words. Most users will already know what *drama* and *queen* mean, even before looking up *drama queen*, so when reading the paraphrase of meaning provided, information, images, and conceptions will be added to their stored knowledge. By not clarifying any of the exclusive and othering aspects brought up here, *Oxford* is actually encouraging further clichéd, reductive, and degrading correlations. They might instead consider clarifying the *othering* as a part of the paraphrase of meaning, or if need be, divulge this as a usage note<sup>200</sup>. With *Oxford's* tacit approval of the continued use of *drama queen*, users will unwittingly propagate stereotypes and prejudices. **Table 3:3** summarises such images and conceptions in another, more readily apparent, manner:

<b>Table 3:3: Queens and kings:</b>	
<b><i>Drama Queen</i></b> (the lemma looked up)	<b><i>Drama King</i></b> (no need to look it up <sup>201</sup> )
emotional, exaggerated	always under control
melodramatic, overly theatrical	the “master” of the theatre
scared, confused, insecure, meek	formidable, certain, secure, arrogant
<i>feminine</i> – “bad and subordinate”	<i>masculine</i> – “good and superior”

### 3.12.2: The *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*<sup>202</sup>:

*“someone who gets too upset or angry over small problems:*

*You're such a drama queen! It's no big deal.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, used informally, and labelled as disapproving. There are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

As can be seen, an illustrative example was considered to be so useful that it was included along with the paraphrase of meaning. The paraphrase of meaning part of the article is, like that of *Oxford's*, apparently fine. The example part of the article is a well-chosen representative illustration. And, they helpfully alerted users to the expression being used in a *disapproving* manner.

<sup>200</sup> As mentioned, usage notes, naturally, may or may not be read.

<sup>201</sup> Because it conforms to how we are trained by language and culture to see things.

<sup>202</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214210731/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/drama-queen>

Now on to the bad part: just like with the *Oxford* paraphrase of meaning, *Cambridge* left out all the associations, typecasting, othering, etc.

### 3.12.3: The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*<sup>203</sup>:

*“a person given to often excessively emotional performances or reactions”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and there are example sentences.

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

*Merriam-Webster* communicates virtually the exact same meaning as *Oxford*, except that they use slightly different wording. Just like with *Oxford*, there were no labels such as “*offensive*.” Therefore, the commentary on this paraphrase of meaning is the same as that for the *Oxford* one.

### 3.12.4: The *Macmillan Dictionary*<sup>204</sup>:

*“someone who tends to treat situations as more serious or exciting than they really are. This word shows that you are annoyed by people like this”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and used informally. Their *American English* paraphrase of meaning is the same. There are no example sentences.

#### Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:

Although *Macmillan* does not label the lemma as “*disapproving*,” they did make that clear in the paraphrase of meaning. The commentary on the bias and exclusion for this article would be the same as for the others up till now.

### 3.12.5: The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*<sup>205</sup>:

*“A person who reacts theatrically to minor difficulties, regularly tries to be the center of attention, and treats other people's problems as less important than his or her own.”*

<sup>203</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214211019/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/drama%20queen>

<sup>204</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214211239/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/drama-queen>

<sup>205</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190428202308/https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=drama+queen>

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun. There are no example sentences.

### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

The American Heritage lexicographers introduce an element of *selfishness* into the meaning, in addition to “the usual *drama queen* histrionics.” This is a valuable component to be aware of, and altogether the paraphrase of meaning is clear and concise. They use the awkward “*his or her*” “gender-neutral” wording, as opposed to the inclusive and much more elegant *singular they*, but that’s okay. What’s not okay is, just as all the others to this point, they completely ignore the bias and exclusion of the expression.

[The *Chambers Dictionary* did not have an article for *drama queen*.]

### **3.12.6: The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English<sup>206</sup>:**

*“a woman or homosexual man who tends to behave as if situations are worse than they really are – used to show disapproval”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is used to show disapproval. There is one example sentence.

### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Finally, a dictionary which acknowledges the connection that the English language and culture have made between *drama queen* and *women* and “*homosexual men*.” This “personality trait” is engineered to malign *females* and *homoerotic males*. Anyone can behave this way, so why single *them* out? Since women and “homosexual men” are portrayed in society as such “emotional exaggerators,” then they must be so, right? Wrong. *Patriarchy* demands that women know their place and are kept there, and since to patriarchs “homosexual men” are “not really men,” then they get thrown in the ditch along with females. The “free pass” the “straight” males get for such conduct is evident by them being nowhere in sight in the paraphrase of meaning. Besides, “men” of any age can behave any way they want to, since “*boys will be boys*.”

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<sup>206</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214211657/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/drama-queen>

All of the other dictionaries in this group were either unaware of the “not real men” link, or were unwilling to articulate it. Either way, *Longman* deserves credit for being the only one to provide a real-life paraphrase of meaning for **drama queen**. If they had added that the expression unjustifiably promotes belittling conventionalised depictions of women and “homosexual men,” they would have had a respectably bias-free paraphrase of meaning.

### 3.12.7: The *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*<sup>207</sup>:

*“a person who often has exaggerated or overly emotional reactions to events or situations: You're such a drama queen! You always have to have all the attention.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and used informally. There are example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Similarly to the *American Heritage* paraphrase of meaning, *Random House* includes a *selfishness* component, which makes the “over the top emotionality” seem even worse. Yet again, not a clue to the bias and exclusion incorporated into **drama queen** was given in the paraphrase of meaning.

### 3.12.8: The *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary*<sup>208</sup>:

*“If you call someone a drama queen, you mean they react to situations in an unnecessarily dramatic or exaggerated way.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, used informally, and there is one example sentence.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Their treatment of the expression is quite similar to that Oxford and Cambridge gave it, so the same comments apply here.

<sup>207</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214211909/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/drama-queen?s=t>

<sup>208</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214212249/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/drama-queen>

### 3.12.9: The *Collins English Dictionary*<sup>209</sup>:

*“a person who tends to react to every situation in an overdramatic or exaggerated manner”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and used informally. There are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Nothing new to report here.

### 3.12.10: Contrasting these paraphrases of meaning with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with this expression.

**drama queen** *n* – *histrionic person*. A person who is overly dramatic and unduly emotional. Can refer to a male or female, but is especially offensive when referring to a man. The use of this expression further promotes the unjustifiable vilification of women and “non-heterosexual men,” on the basis of hackneyed cultural notions of them being “so melodramatic.” This is yet another stratagem within a patriarchal framework that trivialises these groups, and pre-emptively downplays the importance of what they express, since only “real men” matter in such a society. There is no “*drama king*” used in a corresponding manner. On the contrary, being called a *drama king* would likely be taken as a compliment.

A comment on dictionary users, the paraphrase of meaning, and a few on the article structure:

- A user may only want an inclusive alternative for this expression, so it is provided immediately after the lemma. No need to read through, or even scan the article. They can do that if they want to, of course, and the paraphrase of meaning will be there for them when they need that additional insight.
- The inclusive alternative is in *italics*, for immediate distinction. No wasted time or energy.
- A brief description is given, followed by illustrations of the role this expression plays within the context of othering through the language.

<sup>209</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190214212249/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/drama-queen>

- Finally, the corresponding expression if the genders were reversed is given, which highlights yet another instance in which language is used to keep the males on top and the females on the bottom.

There will be much more on these aspects in Chapters Four and Five.

### 3.12.11: *Drama queen* conclusions:

In all, there were twelve dictionaries, and excluding the *Chambers* lexicon (which sat this one out), there were a total of eleven analyses of the paraphrases of meaning each provided when *drama queen* was entered into the search box on their respective websites<sup>210</sup>.

Despite this being an obviously derogatory expression, none of these dictionaries labelled it as *offensive*, *insulting*, or *disparaging*, etc. Only two of the eleven managed to label the expression as even “disapproving” or “showing disapproval.” On a *superficially* inclusive note, none of these dictionaries (other than *Longman*) specified that the expression applies only to males or only to females, or even that one gender or the other is more often linked with the expression. This makes the dictionaries *appear* to be unbiased in their paraphrases of meaning in this regard, since it’s “everyone equally.” Nonetheless, linguistically and culturally *drama queen* evokes images of *females* and “*homosexual males*,” groups of people who are so uncritically associated with acting “overly emotional and dramatic.” So, it’s not really just “anyone” being excessively emotional. It *can* be anyone, but in using this expression, all females and many males are unnecessarily vilified.

Only one of these lexicons, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, correlated the obvious linguistic and cultural link between *drama queen* and *females* and “*non-heterosexual*” males. Nonetheless, like the rest of these general English dictionaries they were oblivious to the manner in which this expression unjustifiably promotes belittling conventionalised depictions of women and “homosexual men.” As far as the “regular/real/macho men” go, as per the “*boys will be boys*” mantra, these can behave any

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<sup>210</sup> As mentioned, when two dictionaries from the same publisher, such as Oxford’s *British & World English* and their *US English* each provide identical treatment to any given term here studied, the analysis of one naturally applies to the other. So, for the “twelve dictionary recap” each such case counts for a total of two analyses.



way they want to. So, even when they act like overgrown babies, “it’s okay.” Any male that is “non-conforming” in any regard who is an “emotional exaggerator,” however, would likely be labelled as a *drama queen*.

It was also shown that as a part of the overall vilification of *females* and *homoerotic males* within a *patriarchal* framework, that an expression such as *drama queen* trivialises these groups, and pre-emptively downplays the importance of what they express, since only “real men” matter in such a society. Similarly to a wife risking being labelled as a *shrew* if she even opens her mouth<sup>211</sup>, anything a *drama queen* (and therefore *females* and *homoerotic males*) may express is “preventively understood” to be emotionally blown out of proportion, or something of that ilk. As a whole, these lexicons did not make even the slightest reference to this bias built into *drama queen*, so they therefore did a poor job from the inclusive usage perspective.

It was also noted that none of the analysed English dictionaries had an article for “*drama king*,” which is not surprising, since the expression is not used in a corresponding manner to *drama queen*. It was also pointed out that being called a *drama king* might anyway be taken as something very positive, in stark contrast to being referred to as a *drama queen*.

Should it be necessary for a dictionary user to also go through the literature to verify whether a word or expression has incorporated bias and/or exclusion? Should people accessing the most authoritative language sources available have to be unsure whether the information they are getting is trustworthy from the bias-free and inclusive standpoints? Of course not!

The paraphrase of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary describes things as they truly are, the way a dictionary is supposed to. This further highlights the need for such lexicons, in order for users to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the real-life use and attendant consequences of so many words and expressions.

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<sup>211</sup> As laid out clearly in the *spinster* example.

### 3.13: Example eight, *gender affirmation*:

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature three types of lemmas, namely:

- 1) Words and expressions that are biased or exclusive, followed by bias-free and inclusive alternatives, plus explanations which provide insight into the biased and/or exclusive nature of the lemma. Examples of these in this chapter are *boys will be boys*, *senior moment*, *spinster*, and *drama queen*.
- 2) Expressions that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. In this chapter these are *rape culture*, *victim blaming*, and *policing of masculinity*.
- 3) Lemmas that are neither biased nor exclusive, but that serve to double-check on bias-free and inclusive usage. These include *gender affirmation*, the expression to be explored in depth in this section, which will wrap up Chapter Three of this dissertation.

*If every person is already the way they are, then why is it so hard for them to be themselves?*

In a word: *policing*. We are all being watched.

And I am *not* referring to the constant surveillance we are under<sup>212</sup>, with security cameras (on the streets, at shopping complexes, airports, public transport, office buildings, schools, stadiums, mounted on drones, in our own mobile phones surreptitiously monitoring us, etc.), taping and recording of all phone calls, data snooping/dredging/meta-analysis (emails, shopping, visited websites, flagged keywords<sup>213</sup> of anything said or written, etc.), plus what many voluntarily provide, such as a running narration of their lives through social media, and so on.

What *is* being referred to in this example is how so many people observe and regulate the activities, conduct, and expression of those perceived to be “different” in any conceivable

<sup>212</sup> To be certain, this monitoring can also be othering, demeaning, and utilised to profile by apparent race, purported nationality, “ostensible” evil thoughts (including dissent) which may lead to possible evil actions, etc.

<sup>213</sup> Words, that if used in a call, text search, social media post, etc., will get “additional governmental surveillance.”

manner, in order to ensure absolute compliance with any and all “norms” that may be applicable. On account of looking for ways to *other* them, these frightened, bored, and unhappy chauvinists insist on unnecessarily interfering with the lives of individuals who are just trying to mind their own business. A prime example is the *policing of masculinity*, explained in detail earlier in this chapter.

### 3.13.1: We are all being *policed*, by each other.

It would seem that “everybody” is on patrol, monitoring “everyone” else, to make sure they are being conventional, following tradition, complying with all rules unquestioningly, following the crowd, fitting in, following any orders given, obeying authority blindly, etc.

We are being policed myriad ways, including:

- are we male enough?
- are we female enough?
- are we clearly female *or* male (but nothing “in between,” “combinational,” or “beyond?”)
- are we religious?
- are we the “right” religion?
- are we from “our country?”
- are we “white” enough?
- are we speaking in a locally accepted language?
- are we married?
- are we parents?
- are we in any way “disabled?”
- are we monetarily wealthy enough?

Thankfully, there are those who don’t police others, and simply understand that people are people, each in their own way.

As mentioned several times in this dissertation, *gender* is a *social construct*. That is, it’s made up. Invented to *other* anyone who does not “measure up” to what is required from us from the day we are born (or even earlier if ascertained during a pregnancy), when our *gender* is *assigned* to us.

### 3.13.2: Room to be yourself.

For many individuals, however, there comes a time in their lives that they realise that the *gender* that has been *assigned* to them does not align with how they identify and wish to express themselves. In this society, though, where everything has to be pigeon-holed, such as gender, race, religion, and nationality, not *being* the gender you are *supposed* to be can make putting this into practice a real quagmire.

Many persons who find themselves in this situation decide that despite what other people (usually including family members, religious types, “the public on the street,” the police, medical practitioners, and so on) try to *force* them to do or not to do, they anyway opt for a *gender expression* other than that they have been *labelled* with. In doing so, these individuals renounce to their “current gender” and go on to become their true selves through *gender affirmation*.

### 3.13.3: Sex versus gender.

To many people, the distinction between the words *sex* and *gender* is unclear, so here is this from *Oxford*, as presented within their article for *gender*<sup>214</sup>, to help clarify:

*“Either of the two sexes (male and female), especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.”*

They elucidate further with a *usage note*:

*“Although the words gender and sex are often used interchangeably, they have slightly different connotations; sex tends to refer to biological differences, while gender more often refers to cultural and social differences and sometimes encompasses a broader range of identities than the binary of male and female.”*

None of the twelve general English dictionaries being analysed in this chapter has an article yet for *gender affirmation*. Two less inclusive and less precise (but still much more commonly utilised) expressions for this concept (especially when referring to the medical

<sup>214</sup> Permalink taken on 29 March, 2019:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190329181414/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gender>

aspects), are *sex change* and *gender reassignment*. These latter two do appear in most of these lexicons, so in this section we will analyse how this group handles these expressions. *Sex change* appears in eleven of the twelve, and ten of twelve likewise have an article for *gender reassignment*. As will be seen, *Merriam-Webster* also had an article for *gender-confirmation surgery*, which is more inclusive.

Although the use of the expressions *sex change*, *sex-change operation*, *sex-change surgery*, *sex reassignment surgery*, *gender reassignment*, and *gender-reassignment surgery* (and so on) are commonly utilised, they are nonetheless pejorative and outdated. In addition to implying that something “wrong” needs to be “corrected,” these expressions also reduce the changes a person makes to mere body parts, such as a vagina, a penis, and/or modifying the way the chest area looks. Despite how precise and inclusive *Oxford’s* paraphrase of meaning of *gender* is, like all but *Merriam-Webster*<sup>215</sup>, they make no reference to the mental aspects of the process of affirming the *gender* that a person identifies with, when said *gender* does not match their “designated” one. Here is a closer examination:

#### 3.13.4: The paraphrase of meaning for *sex change*, as seen on the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online website*<sup>216</sup>, for their *British & World English dictionary*:

*“A change in a person’s physical sexual characteristics, typically by surgery and hormone treatment.”*

*“he campaigned to have his sex change legally recognized”*

*[as modifier] “a sex-change operation”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is indicated that it is a noun, and there are example sentences. The paraphrase of meaning in their *US English Dictionary* is identical.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

*“A change in a person’s physical sexual characteristics, typically by surgery and hormone treatment.”*

This is an accurate paraphrase of meaning for the lemma, if only the medical aspects are taken into account. Defining *sex change* without making any reference to *gender*, however,

<sup>215</sup> And *only* in their *gender-confirmation surgery* article at that.

<sup>216</sup> Permalink:

[https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225007/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sex\\_change](https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225007/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/sex_change)

reduces the changes a person makes to the anatomical, as mentioned above. On the inclusiveness side, unlike all but one other dictionary in this group, this paraphrase of meaning does not stipulate that the change **must** be to *female* **or** *male*.

It may be suggested that *Oxford* has two main venues to be inclusive:

- To provide a comment to the effect that a “sex change” refers to the anatomical part of the process, which should also be considered along with the mental aspects.
- To also have an article that addresses the psychological components, such as *gender affirmation*, to which the reader could be referred to.

*“he campaigned to have his sex change legally recognized”*

The example sentence included along with the paraphrase of meaning is excellent, as the legal consequences of doing something that goes against the heteronormative patriarchal established order are harsh. The additional example sentences are also helpful to users.

*[as modifier] “a sex-change operation”*

The example they give as a modifier is especially fitting, as it subtly makes the distinction between *sex change* and *sex change operation*, which are used by most people (and all the lexicographers preparing the scrutinised dictionaries in this chapter) interchangeably.

#### 3.13.4.1: The paraphrase of meaning for *gender reassignment*, as seen on the *Oxford Living Dictionaries* online website:

Their article for *gender reassignment*<sup>217</sup> conveys more or less the same message. They omit the example sentence that had been included alongside the *sex change* paraphrase of meaning, so there is:

*“The process whereby a person's physical sexual characteristics are changed by means of medical procedures such as surgery or hormone treatment.”*

*“as modifier ‘gender reassignment surgery’”*

Notwithstanding their inclusive description of *gender*, where *Oxford* makes distinctions between *sex* and *gender*, such nuances are nowhere to be seen in their paraphrase of meaning

<sup>217</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083017/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gender\\_reassignment](https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083017/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gender_reassignment)

of *gender reassignment*. Besides that, since the description is basically the same as they gave for *sex change*, the same comments apply. Their *US English Dictionary* article is identical.

### 3.13.5: The *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* paraphrases of meaning for *sex change*, and for *gender reassignment*<sup>218</sup>:

*“an operation that, together with hormone treatment, gives a man many of the characteristics of a woman, or a woman many of the characteristics of a man.”*

*[before noun ] a sex-change operation*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** they identify it as a noun, and provide an example of the use of the phrase before a noun. There are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

*Cambridge* is strictly adhering to the *gender binary*, and is therefore promoting it. A *woman* can more or less become a *man*, or vice versa. It is taken for granted that “there is nothing else.” In stating that an *operation* is involved, they are practically using the expression interchangeably with *sex-change operation*. It might have been more elegant to have had two senses, with one of them being the latter.

For *gender reassignment*<sup>219</sup> they offer this:

*“a process, including medical operations, by which someone's sex is changed from male to female or female to male”*

Again, despite *gender* and *sex* not being the same thing, they use the words interchangeably. Although the *gender binary* is maintained, they do use *male* and *female*, which is a step up from *man* and *woman* as far as inclusiveness is concerned.

### 3.13.6: The online version of the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*<sup>220</sup>:

*“an operation in which a man's body is changed to be like a woman's body or a woman's body is changed to be like a man's”*

<sup>218</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225200/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sex-change>

<sup>219</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083252/https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/gender-reassignment>

<sup>220</sup> [https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225430/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sex%20change%20\(operation\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225430/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sex%20change%20(operation))

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** they identify it as a noun, and there are no example sentences.

### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

When entering “*sex change*” in the search box, the article with the lemma “*sex change (operation)*” is provided, so *Merriam-Webster* presents the expression as synonymous with *sex-change operation*. *Cambridge* added hormone treatment to make a distinction, but with *Merriam-Webster* it’s solely the surgery. Similarly to the description provided by *Cambridge*, the *gender binary* is firmly adhered to, and people have the choice to kind of “flip-flop” between sexes. Yet again, any and all mental aspects of the process are ignored.

Although *Merriam-Webster* has no article for *gender reassignment*, they do for both *gender-confirmation surgery*<sup>221</sup>, and for *gender-reassignment surgery*<sup>222</sup>. Their *gender-reassignment surgery* article has a link to *gender-confirmation surgery*, where a paraphrase of meaning is provided:

*“any of several surgical procedures that a transgender person may choose to undergo in order to obtain the physical characteristics that match their gender identity”*

Amongst all the dictionaries in this group, this paraphrase of meaning is the only one that is *inclusive*, since:

- It acknowledges a *sense of agency* in one’s life by using the phrase “*may choose*.” One of the most important objectives of *oppression* and *othering* is to **deny** *others* choices in their lives. Choosing a *gender* is of monumental significance.
- With “*match their gender identity*” *Merriam-Webster* is also recognising that the assigned gender does not necessarily correspond with the one a person identifies with. Even the article with the lemma “*gender-confirmation surgery*,” is indicative of this.
- They also manage to keep the *gender binary* out of the picture.

As a whole, very well done!

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<sup>221</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083354/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gender%20confirmation%20surgery>

<sup>222</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083507/https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gender%20reassignment%20surgery>



### 3.13.7: The online version of the *Macmillan Dictionary (British English)*<sup>223</sup>:

*“a medical operation or series of operations that change a man into a woman or a woman into a man.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** they identify it as a noun, the paraphrase of meaning for their *American English* dictionary is identical, and there are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

As *Macmillan* describes it, when the operations are over, a *sex change* involves literally *trading* one sex for the other. Again we see the *gender binary* prominently presented, with no other options to even consider, other than *man* or *woman*, and like the rest, no psychological components seem to exist.

### 3.13.8: The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*<sup>224</sup>:

*“The modification of a person’s biological sex characteristics by surgery to produce those of the opposite sex.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is identified as a noun, and there are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

*American Heritage* has no article for “*sex change*,” but does for “*sex reassignment surgery*,” so the latter is analysed. The paraphrase of meaning given is similar to the ones before it, but also includes the expression “*opposite sex*.” “Both” sexes are commonly referred to as “opposites,” which above all accomplishes three things:

- helps make sure the *gender binary* continues to reign supreme
- provides a simplistic way to see things, yet “sounds” (to many) as scientifically-based
- others *both* genders, as it is a “battle between the sexes,” and in a male-dominated society we know who is “preordained” to lose this conflict.

<sup>223</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225609/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/sex-change>

<sup>224</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190425190744/https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=sex+reassignment+surgery>

Their incorporating “*biological sex characteristics*” into the paraphrase of meaning might have hinted at there also being a psychological component, but, since they did not take this line of thought any further, that was the end of that.

Please note that *American Heritage* has no article for *gender reassignment*.

### 3.13.9: The *Chambers 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary*<sup>225</sup>:

*“the changing of sex in humans by the surgical alteration or re-forming of the sex organs, and by the use of hormone treatment”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** it is identified as a noun, and there are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

Not much new here except for the slightly more descriptive “*alteration or re-forming of the sex organs.*” On the positive side, whether intended or not, like *Oxford*, they do not specify changing to “one sex or the other.” As is the case with the rest of the lexicons here studied, users looking up this expression could never guess that “changing sex” might involve more than genital surgery and other strictly medical services, such as hormone therapy.

Please note that *Chambers* has no article for *gender reassignment*.

### 3.13.10: The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*<sup>226</sup>:

*“a medical operation or treatment which changes someone’s body so that they look like someone of the other sex”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and there are no example sentences.

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<sup>225</sup> Please note that for all Chambers paraphrases of meaning, one must go to their webpage (<https://chambers.co.uk>) and enter any desired term. Since the results don’t have their own unique page, unfortunately no links to specific paraphrases of meaning can be given.

<sup>226</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221225842/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/sex-change>

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

*Longman* also sticks to the *gender binary*, and to the medical and superficially visible. The “so that they look like someone of the other sex” is kind of vague, and is reminiscent of how a *coiffure* might be chosen from a *hairstyle book*.

Their paraphrase of meaning for *gender reassignment*<sup>227</sup> is “more magical,” as the “conversion” is complete:

*“the medical process of changing someone’s body so that a man becomes a woman or a woman becomes a man”*

The *gender binary* is very strictly adhered to, to the extreme of a “perfect transfiguration,” as suggested by the word “*becomes*.”

**3.13.11: The *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* has this, for *sex change*<sup>228</sup>:**

*“the alteration, by surgery and hormone treatments, of a person’s physical sex characteristics to approximate those of the opposite sex: Born male, she now lives as a woman but has no plans for a sex change.”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun. There are example sentences.

**Analysis of the paraphrase of meaning:**

They add nothing new nor inclusive in the paraphrase of meaning. Similarly to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, they chose to include the “*opposite sex*” thing.

The *example* sentence they incorporate into the paraphrase of meaning, nevertheless, is noteworthy:

- “*Born male,*” They specify the “**assigned**” gender/sex.
- “*she now lives as a woman*” They use the feminine pronoun, which acknowledges *her* decision (and not “*his*” when he was “*still a man.*”)
- “*but has no plans for a sex change.*” This is self-affirming, and even obviates the time, expense, and complications of any surgery or hormone treatments.

<sup>227</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083659/https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/gender-reassignment>

<sup>228</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230108/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/sex-change?s=t>

When *gender reassignment*<sup>229</sup> is entered into the search box, the result is the article for *sex change*. The only further comment on this is that this is indicative that to *Random House* the expressions are equivalent.

### 3.13.12: The *COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary* does not include *sex change* as a lemma, but does have *gender reassignment*<sup>230</sup>:

*“Gender reassignment is the process of changing a person's sex from male to female or from female to male with an operation and other medical procedures.”*

Nothing new here.

### 3.13.13: The *Collins English Dictionary*, which has two senses for this expression<sup>231</sup>:

*“a. a change in a person's physical sexual characteristics to those of the opposite sex, often achieved by surgery”*

*“b.(as modifier) a sex-change operation”*

**Additional items in the dictionary article:** the lemma is identified as a noun, and there are no example sentences.

#### **Analysis of both senses:**

Sense *a* presents the change, again, as strictly physical, and they too included the *othering* “*opposite sex*” trope.

Sense *b* is more of a note on its use as a modifier. They also employ the same instance as that offered by *Oxford*, so the same comments apply.

Their paraphrase of meaning for *gender reassignment*<sup>232</sup> reads so:

*“male-to-female or female-to-male transformation involving surgery and hormone treatment”*

<sup>229</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083809/https://www.dictionary.com/browse/gender--reassignment?s=t>

<sup>230</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230303/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/sex-change>

<sup>231</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190221230303/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/sex-change>

<sup>232</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190411083918/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/gender-reassignment>

As is the case with the *Longman* paraphrase of meaning, the “conversion” is “absolute,” as evidenced by the word “transformation:”

### 3.13.14: Recap of the provided paraphrases of meaning.

In all, there were twelve dictionaries, and eleven analyses<sup>233</sup> of the paraphrases of meaning provided when “*sex change*” was entered into the search box on their respective websites. In 100% of these cases, the meanings and explanations referred to *surgery*, either using this word itself, or *operation*. Similarly, in each and every paraphrase of meaning, that which is anatomically and physiologically apparent was the “objective” of the *sex change*, with expressions including: *physical sexual characteristics*, *biological sex characteristics*, and *changes someone’s body*.

There was absolutely nothing in any of the paraphrases of meaning that would alert users to the psychological components of a “*sex change*,” such as the motivations a person may have, their emotions, concerns, and the desire to fulfil themselves in a manner that evidences that they have a sense of agency in their own lives.

With the notable exception of the *Merriam-Webster* treatment of the expression, all ten dictionaries having an article for *gender reassignment* had basically the same things to say as they did for *sex change* (some dealt with both identically). Therefore, the same comments, with very minor modifications at best, applied.

*Merriam-Webster*, though, made three *inclusive* points in their paraphrase of meaning of *gender reassignment*:

- They acknowledged a *sense of agency* in a “non-conforming” person’s life.
- They recognised that the assigned gender does not necessarily correspond with the one a person identifies with.
- They managed to keep the *gender binary* out of the picture.

Notwithstanding the inclusive paraphrase of meaning *Merriam-Webster* has for *gender reassignment*, in stark contrast to the biased one they gave for *sex change*, the approach all

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<sup>233</sup> As noted at the start of the chapter, when two dictionaries from the same publisher, such as Oxford’s *British & World English* and their *US English* each provide identical treatment to any given term here studied, the analysis of one naturally applies to the other. So, for the “twelve dictionary recap” each such case counts for a total of two analyses.

of these dictionaries take could be referred to as *behaviourist*<sup>234</sup>. This is on account of their only giving importance to the *outward* (what is visible, such as the genitals, in this case), while dismissing the “*inward*” (the mental aspects, such as thoughts, feelings, and desires). This fits in appropriately with the mostly literal society we live in. Conformist, superficial, obvious, and lacking imagination. To most people who are not “afflicted” with “something abnormal,” either it does not exist, or it is to be ridiculed as is anything “not normal” or “unorthodox.” Even a parent might shriek “*my baby is a monster*” when seeing “ambiguous genitalia” and/or hearing a medical practitioner uttering “oh, my, *God!*”

This lack of sensitivity is reflected in the words used. If all that was involved was the surgery and hormone treatment, then the listed lemmas in these lexicons could have been *sex-change operation*, *sex-change surgery*, or *sex-reassignment surgery*, etc. Two publishers actually did this, one providing “*sex change (operation)*” and the other “*sex reassignment surgery*” when entering “*sex change*” in the search box. Although each of these expressions is *othering*, at least it would be unmistakeable that they are talking *only* of the medical services aspect. An *inclusive* expression for solely the operation would be *gender-affirming surgery*. *Gender-confirmation surgery* is also inclusive, and *Merriam-Webster* happily included it in their lexicon.

Except for two publishers<sup>235</sup>, the analysed paraphrases of meaning all stalwartly defended and promoted the *gender binary*, which as explained earlier is indispensable for the continuance of *patriarchy* and the oppression of females<sup>236</sup>. They chose wording such as “*change a man into a woman*,” and “*so that they look like someone of the other sex*,” and in three cases “*those of the opposite sex*.” So, according to these dictionaries, there are two, and *only* two possibilities, within which a “choice” can be made. Anything other than *man/male* or *woman/female* is therefore made invisible on account of its “not existing,” since they were not mentioned.

As also stated, the use of “*opposite sex*” by several of these publishers *others* “both,” as this hackneyed stereotype frames *gender* as a “battle between the sexes” within which it is “all of *us* against all of *them!*” In a male-dominated society it is already known who is “destined” to

<sup>234</sup> As far as the *behaviourist* “scientific” standpoint is concerned, “if you can’t see it, it doesn’t exist.”

<sup>235</sup> They may not have made explicit reference to “the two sexes” on account of these being taken for granted.

<sup>236</sup> Two publishers were exceptions in their *sex change* articles, and two (not the same) in *gender reassignment*.

lose. The *gender binary* insures that *males* stay on top, so they make certain that this arbitrary cataloguing of all humans into two mutually-exclusive genders remains strong, in order to maintain their usurped power.

### 3.13.15: An inclusive and bias-free paraphrase of meaning for *gender affirmation*, and conclusions.

What better way to keep a group down, than to base the subjugation on something that (until recently) they could not do anything about, such as their *sex*? In a *patriarchal society* a female can be doomed from birth. The outward *sex* a person has is pretty easy to determine, and in *most* cases can be answered by a single question: *is their body “outfitted” with a vagina*<sup>237</sup>? If yes, it’s a *woman*; if not, then it is a *man*. To account for “the rest,” according to [Blackless, et al \(2000\)](#), up to 2% of live births worldwide are *intersex*<sup>238</sup>. As defined by the *Macmillan Dictionary*, *intersex* is<sup>239</sup>:

*“the condition of having sexual characteristics that do not fit the typical definition of male or female”*

In this context, *intersex* is the same as *intersexuality* with the latter expression currently falling out of favour, on account of its being considered by many as offensive. Before *intersexuality* was employed for this notion, the vilifying expression *hermaphroditism*<sup>240</sup> was used (and unfortunately still is by many people, even in the literature<sup>241</sup>). Although each of these expressions are all being used concurrently, there are still more variants for the same concept, including slight improvements, such as *differences of sex development* and *disorders of sex development*. These latter two are gaining popularity, with *differences* being more inclusive than *disorders*. Soon enough an even more sympathetic expression will arise organically amongst those who care. And lexicographers will need to be continually on the lookout for these more inclusive expressions, and when these start to get used by multiple sources in serious endeavours, to incorporate them into bias-free and inclusive expression lexicons.

<sup>237</sup> Needless to say, the single question could also be: *is their body “outfitted” with a penis?*

<sup>238</sup> Estimates vary considerably. [Dickens, \(2018\)](#), for instance, estimates the incidence at 1 per 1500 or 2000 of live births, **but**, *subjective* factors such as physicians considering the visible genitalia as “unacceptable” could make this frequency estimate “much higher.”

<sup>239</sup> Permalink:

[https://web.archive.org/web/20190331170916/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/intersex\\_1](https://web.archive.org/web/20190331170916/https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/intersex_1)

<sup>240</sup> Along with *hermaphrodite*, to describe such a person, of course.

<sup>241</sup> To state the obvious, I am referring here to usage related to humans, and not to that pertaining to plants and animals.



The users of each of these general dictionaries would have benefitted if there were an article that acknowledged the mental aspects of a *sex change* as well, specifically, *gender affirmation*. At the very least, the lexicographers could have made mention of the psychological components in their paraphrase of meaning, or as a usage note. If they had *gender affirmation* as a lemma, they could also suggest users to juxtapose *sex change* with it. As will be brought up in Chapter Five, electronic dictionaries and similar resources should seamlessly refer users to other, more specialised lexicons, when needed.

As awareness and regard grow, the vocabulary to describe anything other than that which is “typical and expected” becomes richer and more compassionate. *Gender affirmation* is an excellent example of how terminology progresses. Here is how a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary might handle this expression, which has already started to replace *sex change*:

**gender affirmation** *n* - **1)** Instead of these deprecated expressions: *sex change*, *sex reassignment*, *gender reassignment*. The process of *gender affirmation* may include the ways in which a person chooses to express the *gender* they identify with, such as through their demeanour, verbal and non-verbal communication, use of a desired name, or clothing selections. From the medical perspective, *gender affirmation* may, if felt to be necessary, comprise any combination of the following gender-affirming services, such as surgery, hormone administration and monitoring, patient-centred counselling, and so on. The use of *gender affirmation* differs from the listed deprecated expressions in these essential manners: the needs, feelings, and desires of the individual are better acknowledged. *Change* or *reassignment* sound like a mistake or something otherwise wrong needs to be rectified, while *affirmation* conveys reassurance and encouragement. A person choosing to assert their gender through surgery would have gender-affirming surgery, as opposed to a sex-change operation or sex-reassignment surgery, etc. A growing number of persons is moving past the construct of gender, with the attendant obligation to adhere physiologically and behaviourally to one, and choosing to simply be themselves, without operations, therapy, or the like. **2)** The acceptance, and perhaps even appreciation, demonstrated in acknowledgement of the gender another person has chosen to have. This also extends to entities, such as those that recognise that individuals can be different *and* esteemed, which request gender-inclusive data such as the preferred name and pronoun, and the current gender identity.



Here are a few comments on the dictionary users' experience, and on the article structure:

- Since ***gender affirmation*** is an *inclusive* expression, the lemma is followed by exclusive and/or biased expressions that should be avoided.
- These deprecated expressions are offered in *italic* to immediately distinguish them, and are preceded by the words “*instead of these deprecated expressions*” to avoid any uncertainties.
- This article has more of an encyclopaedic approach, since users might be looking up this expression for several reasons, including:
  - What does it mean to affirm one's gender?
  - Is a ***gender affirmation*** the same thing as a ***sex change***?
  - If not, what's the difference?
  - What makes ***gender affirmation*** an *inclusive* expression?
- Two senses are provided, each numbered, for easy distinction. The paraphrase of meaning for the second sense, despite being much shorter, still accomplishes two key tasks:
  - it states in what manner the expression is *inclusive*, and
  - has a relevant illustration.
- The likelier of the two senses to have motivated the lemma search is provided first.
- Please refer to Chapters Four and Five for a full analysis on the users, and on the article structure (and much more) of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, respectively.

Despite the *gender binary* and *hegemonic masculinity*, the word ***gender*** has more *inclusiveness* possibilities than ***sex***. ***Gender***, as mentioned several times, is a *social construct*, and as such, what it means to be a ***female*** “or” a ***male*** varies over time, depending on how the culture prevailing at any given moment capriciously defines it. Despite this construct being devised to *other* and *oppress*, its subjective nature ironically lends itself to individuals choosing for themselves what ***gender*** means to *them*, and what manifestation they wish to identify with and embrace. In a *patriarchal society*, where *gender* is decided by others, appropriating your own gender might be considered an insurgent act. Instances of discrimination big and small can assault on a daily basis, including at home, at school, on the job, “on the street,” at the clinic, when *looking* for a place to live, while *trying* to get employment, or when *trapped* within an unfair legal system. Intersectional factors, such as not being white, being a “foreigner,” economically poor, too old or too young, and on and on, can make matters considerably worse.

[Solanas \(1968:20\)](#) summed up what it means to authentically be oneself, *whatever* that may be, *and* at the same time have regard for everyone else:

*“A woman not only takes her identity and individuality for granted, but knows instinctively that the only wrong is to hurt others, and that the meaning of life is love.”*

In this passage Solanas uses “**woman**” in contraposition to the tenets upheld by *patriarchy*, the *gender binary*, *heteronormativity*, and *masculine hegemony*, among many others. At the time Solanas wrote this, the *social construct* sense of **gender** existed but was not yet prevalent, so in this quote, the word “**woman**” signified what would now be expressed as “*female*.”

### 3.14: Chapter Three Conclusions:

Although theoretical lexicography has largely ignored how larger English dictionaries shape bias in the language, and as a whole there has been relatively limited scholarly research performed in this area, this chapter started with a brief survey of the literature in this regard, plus a glimpse at a few reference books looking to encourage bias-free usage.

This was followed by a concise description of the twelve general English dictionaries that would be scrutinised, in order to obtain a feel for the user experience each provides.

The main part of the chapter was a detailed analysis of how these twelve habitually utilised general English language dictionaries perform from the bias and exclusion perspectives. This was accomplished via a thorough dissection of their treatment<sup>242</sup> of eight example expressions, as examined through the insight provided by a *sociolinguistic* and *sociocultural* framework based on analytical methods including *critical discourse analysis*, *critical reality awareness*, and *intersectionality*. Through these, the role language plays in the fostering, preservation, and furtherance of the established order can be properly assessed.

These example expressions included instances of the three types of lemmas an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature, which are:

- 1) Articles with lemmas that represent words and expressions that are biased or exclusive, followed by bias-free and inclusive alternatives, plus explanations which provide insight into the biased and/or exclusive nature of the lemma. The examples of these in this chapter were *boys will be boys*, *spinster*, *senior moment*, and *drama queen*.
- 2) Articles with lemmas that represent words and expressions that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering. In this chapter these were *rape culture*, *victim blaming*, and *policing of masculinity*.
- 3) Articles with lemmas that are neither biased nor exclusive, but that serve to double-check on bias-free and inclusive usage. Users would thus be able to alphabetically look up bias-free and inclusive choices as well. These include *gender affirmation*, which wrapped up this chapter.

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<sup>242</sup> Or not, if a given expression was not among the listed lemmas for any given lexicon.

The paraphrases of meaning and explanations the general English dictionaries provided were also contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary might deal with these expressions. The examples included expressions that are not yet present in some or even any of these “regular” dictionaries, and their absence is a part of helping keep certain social problems invisible. Besides this, having only a sprinkling of slightly more specialised expressions focusing on inclusion/exclusion does not help in acquiring an appreciation of the bigger picture of *oppression* and *othering*.

The following briefly summarises the conclusions for each of the expressions scrutinised in this chapter:

### **Example One:**

*Boys will be boys* serves as a “poster child” for all that is wrong with patriarchy, male hegemony, gender roles, victimisation of females, and the gender binary. The paraphrases of meaning given by all the general English dictionaries had basically the same recurring message: boys and men can behave any way they want since they are “wired” to be “rambunctious,” and that their “harmless” behaviour will never change, so there is no point in even addressing it. While a couple of paraphrases of meaning had words like “aggressive” or “rough,” none of them even hinted at the rape, oppression, violence, typecasting, gendering, etc., that the *boys will be boys* mindset embodies in real life. Therefore, as a group, these dictionaries perform an inadequate job on this expression, since they are saying one thing, while the literature and reality are proving another. Only the paraphrase of meaning of the bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they truly are.

### **Example Two:**

*Senior moment* is an expression that typifies how older people are othered, along with how stereotypes of all kinds are used to trivialize and denigrate. The paraphrases of meaning seen in the general English dictionaries all pretty much said the same thing: older age equates to deteriorated mental capacities. Learners of the English language, for instance, would likely promote this stereotype, unwittingly, after looking up this expression. It was shown through the literature how this incorrect and demeaning clichéd conception of older people has deleterious effects on their self-image, sets the stage for shoddier treatment by others, and

reduces their quality of life in general. Despite this, the regular dictionaries made *senior moment* out to be harmless jocular expression. The suggested paraphrase of meaning provided by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they are in the real world, the way a dictionary is supposed to, in addition providing inclusive alternatives.

### Example Three:

*Spinster* represents one of the symptoms of the patriarchal oppression of women, as manifested by their not being allowed to make voluntary decisions in their own lives. In a patriarchal society, females are expected to be married by a certain age. Otherwise, they are regarded as unworthy, undesirable, lonely, unfulfilled, and so on. This was reflected in the paraphrases of meaning that the evaluated lexicons provided. Beyond this, not one of these dictionaries gave even the remotest clue to the hefty *patriarchal* exclusion and bias against women that this expression symbolizes. Nor was there anything on the gender binary, heteronormativity, the “marriage ideal,” male hegemony, and so on, that makes *spinster* such a vilifying and marginalising expression. And, they completely ignored the possibility that females should be able to make their own life choices, such as getting married or not. So, from the inclusion/exclusion standpoint, these lexicons did an inadequate job. Only the suggested paraphrase of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they truly are, and in addition provided unbiased alternatives.

### Example Four:

*Rape culture* provides insight into how the oppression of women extends to sexual violence and rape within a patriarchal and capitalistic society where “violence is sexy,” brutality against females is normalised, and the victims are blamed. It was shown how the *rape culture* we live in makes the daily lives of most females an unending succession of reminders of who has the power, who is in control, and who employs force and violence to make certain that the *established order* of males over females is maintained. Several societal phenomena fostering a *rape culture* were explored, including prostitution, pornography, the prevalence of rape myths, rape in war, and rape in marriage. Working to help deny victims in a *rape culture* their voice include biased media coverage of rape, harmful traditions such as the silencing of victims of incestual rape, and a prejudiced judicial system. Only two publishers had paraphrases of meaning for this expression, with one of them providing a bias-free treatment. Other social phenomena that foster a *rape culture* were elaborated on and given paraphrases of meaning, including *street harassment*, *pornography*, *prostitution*, and *rape* itself.

**Example Five:**

***Victim blaming*** exposes the mechanisms employed to attribute partial or complete blame to everyone from rape victims through the countless people slaughtered by invading armies. Despite its prevalence in society, none of these general English dictionaries had an article for ***victim blaming***, making this yet another way that victims are silenced. By means of the literature it was demonstrated that the established order of ***victim blaming*** is enforced mainly through three mechanisms: 1) To make it appear as if whatever happened was partially or fully the victim's fault. 2) To make it seem that any perpetrators are not guilty, or in the worst case only partly so. 3) The victims are repeatedly victimised. Several issues that provide further insight into the harmful real-life consequences of this ideology were also explored, including domestic violence, dehumanisation and demonization of "others," such as "foreigners," and violence against women in general. An inclusive and bias-free paraphrase of meaning for ***victim blaming*** was also provided.

**Example Six:**

***Policing of masculinity*** is the observation and regulation of the activities, conduct, and expression of those perceived to be males, in order to ensure compliance with toxic masculine gender-role norms. The paraphrase of meaning provided for ***policing of masculinity*** was particularly detailed, since this expression embodies many of the deleterious manifestations of patriarchy, male hegemony, heteronormativity, and the gender binary. Paraphrases of meaning were also given for *hegemonic masculinity* and the *gender binary*. Through the scholarly literature many of the mechanisms, manifestations, and destructive consequences of ***policing of masculinity*** were identified, and it was concluded that ***policing of masculinity*** makes life unbearable for everybody. It's agonising even for "conforming" males, since most of their lives are spent in fear of being discovered to be "insufficiently masculine."

**Example Seven:**

***Drama queen*** highlights the oppressive character of patriarchy, heteronormativity, heterosexism, gender roles, and religious dogma. Through the literature it was shown that as a part of the overall vilification of *females* and *homoerotic males* within a patriarchal framework, that an expression such as ***drama queen*** trivialises these groups and pre-emptively downplays the importance of what they express, since only "real men" matter in

such a society. Despite this being an obviously derogatory expression, none of these dictionaries labelled it as *offensive*, *insulting*, *disparaging*, or the like, with only two of them managing to label the expression as “disapproving” or “showing disapproval.” One did correlate the obvious linguistic and cultural link between **drama queen** and *females* and “*non-heterosexual*” males, but, like the rest of them they were entirely oblivious to the manner in which this expression unjustifiably promotes conventionalised and belittling depictions of women and “homosexual men.” The suggested paraphrase of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary described things as they truly are, which is what should be expected from a lexicon.

### Example Eight:

**Gender affirmation** exemplifies how despite “everybody” being on patrol monitoring “everyone” else to make sure that they comply with all traditions and rituals, that no matter what, a person can nonetheless assert a sense of agency in their own lives. None of the twelve general English dictionaries analysed in this chapter has an article yet for **gender affirmation**, so their treatment of two less inclusive and less precise (but much more commonly utilised) expressions for this concept (especially when referring to the medical aspects), **sex change** and **gender reassignment**, were analysed. In all the paraphrases of meaning these lexicons had for **sex change**, only the physiologically apparent was the “objective,” while none of the psychological components were even mentioned. It was the same for all **gender reassignment** paraphrases of meaning, with the notable exception of one publisher. A bias-free and inclusive paraphrase of meaning was given for **gender affirmation**, in which both mental and physical aspects were taken into account, including the needs, feelings, and desires of the individual.

If the linguistic othering and oppression that characterises our “civilisation” are to be eradicated, not only are the lexicographers preparing general English Dictionaries going to have to start paying more attention to what is truly going on, but there is also going to be a need for lexicons that are specifically tailored to the identification, explanation, and exemplification of how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language. In this manner, the expressions users need will be able to be found, and they will be given the treatment they deserve. In their indispensable and highly influential work, the lexicographers preparing these

general dictionaries are making a lot of decisions for all of us, but not taking into account the needs of many of us. This chapter has shown that they should consider refocusing their lens a bit, in order to bring the needs of those who are othered and oppressed much more to the forefront.

It is worth noting that the guidelines provided throughout this chapter go beyond helping lexicographers in the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary; they can also serve to enhance the quality, representativeness, and objectivity of general language dictionaries as well. In order for the general English dictionaries to improve in this regard, and for the preparation of lexicons which are dedicated to bias-free and inclusive usage, practical lexicographers might consider redirecting the approach they take when dealing not just with specific expressions, but to add a healthy amount of empathy to their work in general.

The paraphrases of meaning offered by a bias-free and inclusive usage dictionary describe things as they truly are. The unbiased paraphrases of meaning and added insight they provide help users to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the real-life use and attendant consequences of so many words and expressions.

This would be a new kind of dictionary, one in which bias and exclusion are identified, described, and illustrated, so the lexicographers preparing them should benefit from the added insight of the real-life scenarios and thorough explanations that were also included with all the examples. This chapter, and dissertation as a whole, can be a significant part in helping them to shape a less biased and more inclusive reality through their work, and to stop serving as representatives of the established order.



## Chapter Four - Users of Inclusive and Bias-Free Expression Dictionaries.

### 4.1: Introduction.

[Gouws \(2018:233\)](#) succinctly summarises the *raison d'être* of dictionaries:

*“Dictionaries are compiled in order to be used.”*

All worthwhile dictionaries involve a great deal of work, and are written so that other people will use and hopefully benefit from them. The probabilities of this happening are significantly higher if lexicographers properly address user needs.

This chapter starts with a look at the *function theory* of lexicography. Then, fundamental aspects regarding the *search process* in relation to the *user experience* will be explored, as applicable to an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary.

After this, situations leading to consulting an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary will be identified. This will be followed by a segment on *lexicographers as real people*, and how in order to genuinely address user needs, users need to not just be identified, but to also be understood.

Purely lexicographical situations will be presented as well, along with continued illustrations of the place such dictionaries would have within, and to encourage, a *dictionary culture*. Aspects beyond a successful search will also be explored, underscoring the importance of presenting highly readable paraphrases of meaning and particularly relevant explanations and illustrations, along with unbiased and inclusive alternatives.

The main section of the chapter will be dedicated to the various *user groups* inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries would be prepared for. These include learners in myriad settings, researchers, writers, professionals of all kinds, and individuals from all walks of life, such as those who wish to express themselves in a manner that further reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others.

## 4.2: *Function theory.*

[Tarp \(2012\)](#), in his discussion of theories of lexicography based on his analysis of the works of himself and other key metalexicographers including Wiegand, Gouws, Bergenholtz, Fuertes-Olivera, Bothma, Granger, and Paquot, among others, sets forth that dictionaries should properly address the specific information needs of specific users under specific extra-lexicographical circumstances, and be quick and easy to use.

Inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries should naturally adhere to this model, and in this chapter:

- *Specific information needs* will be identified.
- *Specific users* will be ascertained.
- *Specific extra-lexicographical circumstances* will be enumerated<sup>243</sup>.
- *Speed and ease of use* will be established, with further discussion of this in Chapter Five.

[Bothma and Tarp \(2012:89\)](#) summarise the *function theory* of lexicography so:

“One of the very few general theories is the theory of lexicographical functions, henceforth referred to as the function theory. This theory is built upon the presumption that dictionaries and other lexicographical work are above all *utility tools* conceived and produced with the genuine purpose of satisfying specific types of human needs, i.e. *information needs*, existing in one or several individuals in society.” (Italics, as appear here, were in the original text).

And then there is:

“In this respect, dictionaries and other lexicographical works are par excellence *consultation tools*, i.e. artifacts designed to be consulted in order to meet punctual information needs in contrast to global information needs which may be satisfied by other types of artifacts or texts produced with a view to being read and studied from one end to another.” (Italics, as appear here, were in the original text). [Bothma and Tarp \(2012:89\)](#)

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<sup>243</sup> A couple of purely lexicographical settings will also be listed in this chapter.

It will be shown in this chapter that inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries will satisfy specific information needs individuals and groups of users have. It will also be established that such lexicons are above all consultation tools that fulfil specific user needs as they arise<sup>244</sup>.

### 4.3: Fundamental aspects regarding the *search process* in relation to the *user experience*.

[Bergenholtz and Gouws \(2010\)](#) have several things to say about consultations when using reference works, and provide key paraphrases of meaning, including:

- The ***search route*** (also called ***access route***) “*encompasses the process from the selection of an information source up to reaching the destination or destinations in the information source and the eventual conclusion of the search in terms of the specific consultation as either successful or unsuccessful.*” ([Bergenholtz and Gouws \(2010:110\)](#)) They state that a *search route* should be easy.
- ***Search steps*** “*refers to the clearly distinguishable phases from the first step in the search to the next, e.g. from the selection of a dictionary up to the selection of a component of the dictionary or from the stage in the letter S up to the required article starting with the letter S has been found.*” ([Bergenholtz and Gouws \(2010:110\)](#))
- ***Search speed*** “*refers to the time from the start of one stage up to the next stage.*” ([Bergenholtz and Gouws \(2010:110\)](#))
- ***Search time*** “*refers to the total time of a given consultation, i.e. from identifying the problem up to the successful conclusion or a negative termination of the search.*” ([Bergenholtz and Gouws \(2010:111\)](#)) They affirm that a *search time* should be short.

How would these apply to an *inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary*?

- ***Search (access) route***: when it comes to discovering where there is bias and exclusion, to find bias-free and inclusive alternatives, and to generally understand how oppression and othering work, once users become aware of the existence of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, the *search route* could not be easier: simply go directly to the inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary and find what is needed, the first time. Although there would be three distinct types of lemmas in an inclusive and bias-free usage lexicon, there would be only one consecutive A to Z access structure. Among other

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<sup>244</sup> In this chapter it will be shown that there may also be settings where inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries go beyond meeting punctual information needs, creating their own purely lexicographical consultations.

benefits which will be detailed in Chapter Five, this simplifies the *search route* considerably.

- **Search steps** total is one, every time, to arrive at the desired article. Until the technology can be devised that provides a dictionary article before a user can even think of a desired lemma to look up, then a *single step* is ideal. Each lemma must only be looked up once; searching for a specific item *within* the article would be considered an additional step.
- **Search speed** would be kept at a minimum, since there would always only be a single step to locate the desired lemma and article, and a second one to find the desired item within the article.
- **Search time**: that will depend on how fast a person can page through an A to Z dictionary, type in the lemma in the search box, use a voice search, etc. In any case, the total consultation time is kept to a minimum on account of the entire process requiring:
  - determining what lemma is desired, based on an extra-lexicographical need
  - looking it up
  - satisfying the specific information need
  - getting back to whatever was being done before the consultation.

So long as the lemma is there, in one simple step the user gets the article with the desired information, which leads time and time again to successful searches, and an ever more positive lexicographic experience. There will be more on the *access structure* of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries in Chapter Five.

#### 4.4: Situations leading to consulting an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

There are mainly two extra-lexicographical scenarios that might lead to the use of such lexicons: cognitive and communicative situations. *Cognitive situations* are those where users wish to acquire knowledge, as per [Bergenholtz and Bothma \(2011\)](#). An example would be looking up a specific biased word or expression in order to obtain a paraphrase of meaning. *Communicative situations* arise when a user needs assistance with oral or written expression,

as per [Bergenholtz and Bothma \(2011\)](#). For instance, a journalistic text is to be prepared, and a trusty research companion whose focus is *inclusion* is needed.

As mentioned several times, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature three types of lemmas, namely:

- 1) Single and multiword lexical items that are biased or exclusive, followed by bias-free and inclusive alternatives, plus explanations which provide insight into the biased and/or exclusive nature of the lemma.
- 2) Expressions that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion, in order to provide a deeper understanding into the inner workings of these contributors to hate, violence, intolerance, oppression, and othering.
- 3) Lemmas that are neither biased nor exclusive, but that serve to double-check on bias-free and inclusive usage.

Although there will be some users who would read an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary from cover to cover, and others who will happily browse for the learning and/or pleasure of it, most users will employ such lexicons as a quick reference. That is, in most instances, users will determine what lemma is desired, look it up, get the paraphrase of meaning and more, and then get on with whatever was being done before the consultation.

Here is a look at the *search process*<sup>245</sup> for each type of lemma in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, to help illustrate how easy this procedure would be:

- *Single and multiword lexical items that are biased or exclusive*: for example, an extra-lexicographical *cognitive* situation in which someone reads a newspaper feature where an older woman is referred to as a *spinster*, and is unsure of what that represents. This person can tell, however, that there may be bias involved, since the piece describes this female as lonely, unhappy, and ashamed of herself, yet no reasons for this are given in the text. So, this person decides to look up the word. In the case of a printed dictionary it would be found alphabetically in its place. The procedure would be even simpler with an electronic version, by entering the word in the search box, or saying it out loud in an app, etc. Either way, the process is as simple as can be: search for the lemma, read the article, and get back to the newspaper. And, in case they wanted bias-free and inclusive

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<sup>245</sup> Also called *access process*.

alternatives to *spinster*, they also had choices such as *single woman*, *single*, *singleton*, *unattached woman*, and *woman*.

- *Terms that deal with concepts related to bias and exclusion:* for instance, an extra-lexicographical *communicative* situation, where a paper is being written on domestic violence, and the author wishes to have further insight into the dynamics of *victim blaming*. This person becomes a dictionary user as soon as they decide to look up this expression. Whether this user types in (or thumbs their way to, etc.) *victim*, or to *blaming*, will make no difference as far as a successful search goes, since expressions in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be offered in both their “natural” form, as in *victim blaming*, and also by *keywords*, as in *blaming, victim*. So, no time is wasted by looking up *blaming, victim* to be redirected to *victim blaming*, or vice versa. One step: no matter how the lemma is looked up, it will be found the *first* time around.
- *Lemmas that are neither biased nor exclusive:* for example, an extra-lexicographical *cognitive* situation occurring in a classroom setting, where within a seminar *on tolerance in teaching* the speaker uses the expression *gender affirmation*, without defining it nor going into detail on it. A student could look it up at that moment or at a later time, and not only find the desired information the first time around, but also be alerted to biased and exclusive expressions that are preferably avoided, including *sex change*, *sex reassignment*, and *gender reassignment*.

In all three cases, a successful search: fast, easy, and with the needed information obtained. If, conversely, there were three A to Z listings, one for biased expressions, another for inclusive ones, and a third for concepts related to bias and exclusion, a user might potentially need to perform up to three searches to get where they could have arrived with a single one. As mentioned, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be meant to be above all a quick-consultation reference book. In all instances, one consultation per search is ideal. The macrostructural ordering of lemmas will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Five.

#### 4.5: An essay titled “*The relevance of marriage in the 21st century*” as an illustrative example.

Let’s illustrate further by providing a more detailed scenario involving academic writing and a specific information need that can be satisfied with a dictionary: the search for a bias-free

and inclusive paraphrase of meaning for the word *spinster*, as a part of a combined *cognitive and communicative extra-lexicographical situation*. As explained in the *spinster* example in Chapter Three, one of the manifestations of the oppression of women is how they are not allowed to make voluntary decisions in their own lives. If a female gets past a certain age and has still not married, she gets an *othering* label such as *spinster*, *old maid*, or the more recently popularised [*crazy*] *cat lady*. Here is a comparison of how **User A** and **User B** fare:

**User A** is a college student with good research skills and a respectable familiarity with online dictionaries, who is writing an essay on “*The relevance of marriage in the 21st century*.”

**User A** notices during the gathering of information that the word *spinster* repeatedly comes up in relation to unhappiness, harmfulness, and a “failed femininity.” In one online article<sup>246</sup>, for instance, excerpts such as these are found:

*... ”reviled and feared: on welfare, representative of the failure of femininity, a threat to masculinity, a threat to the family, a spinster, a cat lady, bitter, alone” ... and*

*“The portrayal of the ‘single lady’ is ripe with contradiction, both in terms of how much people overemphasize how empowering it is to be single and how much our culture uses single women as examples of failed femininity and spinsterhood.”*

**User A** looks up *spinster* in one of the English dictionaries freely available on the internet, with the objective of gaining further insight into why these women are so demonised and denigrated. When **User A** looked up *spinster* on the *Collins English Dictionary* website, the result was:

*“an unmarried woman regarded as being beyond the age of marriage”*<sup>247</sup>

But, **User A** can recognise words, expressions, and phrases that vilify, disparage, and *other*, such as:

- *reviled and feared*
- *on welfare*
- *representative of the failure of femininity*
- *a threat to masculinity*

<sup>246</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190505220846/https://womensenews.org/2011/10/media-view-single-women-laced-contradictions/>

<sup>247</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190222102239/https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/spinster>

- *a threat to the family*
- *a spinster*
- *a cat lady*
- *bitter and alone*

Where is any of this in the *Collins English Dictionary* paraphrase of meaning? How does the *Collins* paraphrase of meaning help in understanding the demonising and *othering*, along with how they come about?

**User A** then looks up *spinster* in the *Random House Dictionary*, and gets the same message, only phrased slightly differently. **User A** goes on to get paraphrases of meaning from all twelve of the general English dictionaries seen in Chapter Three, yet has gotten nowhere near solving the information need for a real-life paraphrase of meaning for *spinster*. **User A** knows fully well that the bias and exclusion are there, yet the regular English dictionaries are rendering the disparagement and othering *invisible*.

But, **User A** does not give up too easily, and as mentioned has good research skills, and decides to look through the scholarly literature to find out what is truly going on with the expression *spinster*.

Eventually, **User A** comes across a paper by [Barak \(2014\)](#) which explains how the current iteration of *spinster* or *old maid* has become *cat lady*<sup>248</sup> or *crazy*<sup>249</sup> *cat lady*, and how these latter terms serve as a “cautionary tale” of how the “failed femininity” of being unmarried in this patriarchal society gets such women associated with being mentally ill<sup>250,251</sup>.

[Barak \(2014:214\)](#) concludes with:

*“In the meantime, though, let’s retire the cat lady. She and her sisters, spinster and old maid, have had a three century reign. It’s time to vanquish this containment strategy: acknowledge its presence, fight against it, and render it powerless.”*<sup>252</sup>

<sup>248</sup> Wiktionary has this: *cat lady* (sense 2): (slang, euphemistic) *Synonym of spinster*. [Please click on this text for a permalink](#).

<sup>249</sup> The “*crazy*” part, yet again, silences females, since, “whatever a ‘crazy’ person says *must be nonsense*.”

<sup>250</sup> As explored, for instance, by [Probyn-Rapsey \(2018\)](#).

<sup>251</sup> Even a *medical* dictionary has an article on *crazy cat lady*: “A popular stereotype referring to a subpopulation of older single woman who, by circumstance or choice, replace personal and social relationships and human interaction with feline companionship.” *Segen’s Medical Dictionary*; [please click on this text for a permalink](#).

<sup>252</sup> It could have been any of thousands of papers on the bias and exclusion of *spinster*; this was just one to exemplify.



That was very well put, and with that **User A** can get back to the original task, which was writing the essay, after a rather unnecessarily long detour, courtesy of the “regular” English dictionaries. As shown in Chapter Three, when it comes to bias and exclusion, these lexicons give users “*the runaround*.” **User A** was forced to employ significantly more time, energy and/or other resources (such as patience) than necessary. The regular dictionaries *did not* meet her needs as a user. It was just one unsuccessful search after the other. If **User A** had just accepted one of the biased paraphrases of meaning, it would have been reflected in the essay, so bias and exclusion would have been promoted yet again. Happily, **User A** strived for something more.

**User B** is in the same course, has similar research and lexicographical skills as **User A**, and has the very same assignment, with one enormous difference: **User B** is aware of a quality inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. **User B** *starts* there to solve a specific bias and/or exclusion information need. And “the rest is “*history*”<sup>253</sup>.” An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary *would* meet her needs as a user. And all it would take is a single successful search. Being an active member of a comprehensive *dictionary culture* has its benefits. There is a section on *dictionary culture* a bit later in this chapter.

This example is illustrative of the main reason an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is needed: because of what the regular English lexicons are currently *not* offering. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, despite there being widespread biased and exclusive expression in the English language, general dictionaries do not do an adequate job of alerting users to this usage. Quite the contrary. Anyone accessing these dictionaries is usually only getting a part of the full picture, information that ignores these aspects, or even definitions (or a lack thereof) which promote further biased and exclusive usage.

The deficient coverage of the general English dictionaries, where bias and exclusion are concerned, does not go unnoticed by all, as also shown in Chapter Three. More discerning users of the language, such as those in myriad academic settings, writers of all persuasions, other professionals, and individuals from all walks of life, especially those who wish to express themselves in a manner that further reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others, might expect what a dictionary should do:

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<sup>253</sup> The use of the old “*and the rest is history*” cliché is hopefully justified by the *spinster* expression being long overdue to being only of *historical* relevance.

- to have the lemmas they look up (without that, what's the point of searching in the first place?)
- to provide paraphrases of meaning that are accurate and trustworthy (if the descriptions and explanations can't be relied upon, then how are users supposed to use the new/enhanced knowledge with confidence?)
- to deliver information that is comprehensible the first time around (if they have to read over and over again what is there, it is frustrating, time-wasting, and poorly written).
- to be up-to-date (the language has its *current* version, and this should be reflected in the lexicon, especially where *bias and exclusion* are concerned).
- to be easy to use (a *single* search for each desired lemma; no clustering of multiple (sometimes dozens of) lemmas in a single continuous paragraph to be fished from, and so on).

#### 4.6: Truly addressing *user needs*, and going beyond.

In order to genuinely address user needs, users need to not just be *identified*, but to also be *understood*. Regrettably, not all lexicographers will be fit to work on inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries. [Atewologun & Mahalingam \(2018:158\)](#) state the following:

*“In our experience, practical techniques to enable researchers’ self-reflection and empathy when conducting qualitative intersectional research are rare.”*

If a lexicographer does not “get” the real-life othering and oppression *intersectionality* entails, then they are not likely to “get” how *critical discourse analysis*, *critical reality awareness*, and so on function either, since they are all interrelated. That is, either you are able to place yourself in the position of another person and understand them, share their feelings, and care about them, or you are not. Aptitudes and awareness can be honed, to be sure, but, when it comes to empathy, you either have it or you don't. Without introspection and empathy, the unbiased and inclusive paraphrases of meaning, along with the accompanying exemplifications would ring hollow at best, if they were even there.

If a lexicographer or potential lexicographer is unable to appreciate the situation that victims and those subjugated past and present have had and have, then they still have many other areas of lexicography to consider working in. Attempting to write inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, though, would likely result in wasted time for these lexicographers,

and more importantly for the *users*, since they would not be addressing the needs of the latter. There will be more on lexicographers as real people in Chapter Five.

#### 4.7: *Dictionary culture.*

[Gouws \(2018:1\)](#) has plenty to share on a *dictionary culture*, including this summary of several of its main components:

*“It is indicated that within a comprehensive dictionary culture, users need to be familiar with a variety of dictionary types and need to be able to execute a successful retrieval of information from the data on offer in dictionaries. A comprehensive dictionary culture has both general language and specialised dictionaries in its scope. Users need to be made aware of these dictionary types. Lexicographic training can be directed at three groups, namely dictionary users (who need to become familiar with dictionary using skills), future lexicographers (who need to master those aspects of meta-lexicography needed for the compilation of dictionaries) and future trainers of lexicography (who need a sound theoretical basis). The contents of a tertiary course in lexicography could commence with a broad context of the development of both the lexicographic practice and the theory of lexicography. A second focus could be on the contents, the different lexicographic tools, as well as the medium – printed or online format.”*

Since inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries would address the unfulfilled needs of several target user groups, they would be that much more likely to be consulted on a regular basis. This fits in well within the *dictionary culture* supported by [Gouws \(2013\)](#). This everyday utilisation would be further encouraged through the avoidance of failed searches. The looked-up lemmas would be there, the explanations clear, the paraphrases of meaning authoritative and precise, and accurate suggested alternative expressions would also be provided. All of this would encourage more dictionary use, due to less frustration and the doing away of wasted time. In addition, inclusive and bias-free expression lexicons could be the linchpin for reference packages incorporating textbooks, workbooks, and study guides, among other learning, teaching, and knowledge acquisition tools.

Within a *dictionary culture*, people should *already* be aware of the existence of inclusive and bias-free expression lexicons, as was the case of **User B** in the “*The relevance of marriage in*

*the 21st century*” illustrative example. If **User A** had been aware of both the need *and* the existence of these dictionaries, work on the essay would have not only been simplified, it would have been of a much richer quality.

#### 4.8: User groups.

Now there will be a closer look at the various user groups for whom these dictionaries would be written, and how to most effectively meet their needs. The user groups addressed will be diverse, and would include people ranging from learners of the English language all the way through scholars engaged in high-level research into matters dealing with bias and exclusion. It should be noted that many of the specific information needs and “search scenarios” for each user group will have many aspects in common with other user groups, so what applies to one applies to a given extent to all of them.

##### 4.8.1: Learners in academic settings, in general.

Since learning in a scholastic setting also involves teaching, any *learning* dictionary is necessarily also a *teaching* dictionary. Therefore, the needs of both the students and the instructors must be considered. Educators naturally occupy a key role in the formation and nurturing of positive social values, such as respect, tolerance, consideration, and understanding, which foster harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships between people. Since regard is relevant in every instance and setting involving human interaction of any kind, instructors looking to promote bias-free and inclusive communications skills in their students will welcome such a lexicon, as a trustworthy academic companion.

Although inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries could also be prepared with the needs of elementary or primary school pupils in mind, the theoretical model presented in this dissertation would not be for a dictionary addressing the specific needs of such pupils. This is evident in the treatment of the examples analysed in Chapter Three, and in the approach taken in Chapter Two. That said, most of this dissertation could serve as a basis for any kind of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, be they for elementary or primary school pupils, or highly specialised graduate or post-graduate degrees such as medicine or law, with the necessary modifications being made to better tailor to the academic level and/or specific field of study.

Thus, within academic settings, the focus of this dissertation encompasses the high school (or secondary school), university (or college), and graduate (or post-graduate) school levels. The latter also would include specialised faculties and universities. In addition, there may also be workshops focused on inclusive communication, enhancement of the awareness of the needs of other people, and the like, which would not necessarily be limited to students and pupils. These could also include teachers, assistants, instructors, professors, administrators, and other personnel who educate or otherwise interact with them. This too underscores the relevance of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, since they would not be just for the classroom and homework.

Earlier in this chapter, some extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative situations that may lead to using such dictionaries were mentioned. Often seen scenarios in academic settings include looking up unknown words used in class or specifically assigned by instructors to enhance vocabulary, analyses of texts and audiovisual content, the preparation of essays and other written tasks, and so on. Students should be taught to effectively use different types of dictionaries, depending on their needs at a given moment. As [Tarp and Gouws \(2012\)](#) point out, whether a given lexicon is “defined” as a “school dictionary” or not, if it is *used* in schools, it too *is* a “school dictionary.”

Irrespective of where a lexicon is used, the objective is the same: for each and every consultation to be a success, and hopefully a positive experience. That is, that users quickly and easily find exactly what they had in mind when deciding to access the dictionary. There are myriad factors within a *dictionary culture* promoted by [Gouws \(2013\)](#), or lack thereof, that influence learning, teaching, and dictionary use in other settings.

Teachers who encourage (not force) students to regularly consult lexicons will promote their lifelong use, as do parents and guardians who have an affinity for dictionaries and inspire their children to see such reference works as an enhancement to their knowledge-gaining objectives. Each person ultimately develops their own dictionary consultation “lifestyle,” and as more and more people get into the habit of thinking along the lines of a “*how can I solve this specific information need with a dictionary?*” perspective, the further along a *dictionary culture* is advanced.

Since each person is a world unto their own, and at the same time a member of a society, as far as a *dictionary culture* is concerned, [Tarp and Gouws \(2012:334\)](#) share this:

*“A societal (also known as a collective) dictionary culture implies that a general and wide-spread dictionary culture prevails within a given speech community. In contrast, an individual (also known as ideolectal) dictionary culture prevails within the individual member of a speech community, in spite of the lack of a societal dictionary culture.”*

On an institutional level, many academic entities go beyond any applicable legal requirements in their efforts to provide a discrimination-free environment. They frequently have policies that are put in writing, and some have even elaborated useful manuals dealing with bias-free communication. These guides usually provide between a handful and a few dozen examples of biased usage. If, for instance, they wished to prepare more comprehensive materials, fine-tune their policies where inclusion/exclusion are concerned, develop enhanced awareness training guidebooks, or the like, inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries would be ready to help with any of these extra-lexicographical needs. This is another instance demonstrating how being an informed participant within a *dictionary culture* meaningfully enhances the product of a *communicative* situation requiring lexicographical assistance.

#### **4.8.2: Learners in academic settings, specifically.**

##### **4.8.2.1: Learners of English as a first language.**

The preponderance of these users are “born into English,” learning this language from infancy. Others may be taught multiple languages from infancy, which makes English one of multiple native tongues they may have. These can be referred to as *dual language learners*, which is a growing segment of the population ([Hanno and Surrain, 2019](#)).

Dual language learners are usually also *dual culture learners*, as seen, for instance, in a home where both parents identify more with the Spanish language, and their children are in a school where the primary language of instruction is English. In such a household, for instance, Spanish may be used for all conversations, except for those related to school matters. Coping with multiple cultures is no easy task, with the general English language dictionaries making things even more difficult from the lexicographical perspective, by their mostly acknowledging the existence of only one (English). [Benson \(2002\)](#) studied the ethnocentrism of English dictionaries from the historical perspective, going into detail on how these lexicons introduce bias by presenting things through an Anglo-American lens.

Once such learners, “English-born” or otherwise, attain a given level of language proficiency and a familiarity with lexicographical reference works, especially dictionaries, inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries can be incorporated into their collection of academic tools. As far as their day to day schoolwork goes, there will always be extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative situations, such as vocabulary-enhancement lessons and writing assignments, where inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries will be helpful.

Without the additional awareness that inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries provide, what would prevent learners of the English language from unwittingly using, and therefore fostering, biased and exclusive expression? How is a learner of the English language supposed to know, for instance, that *senior moment* is a denigrating ageist stereotype? Furthermore, how might they know that in using this expression the use of clichéd conceptions associated with *other* groups of people is promoted in general? The regular dictionaries made *senior moment* sound like a harmless and humorous way to refer to an “inevitable aspect” of “getting old.” The paraphrase of meaning offered by the inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary described this expression for what it is in real life, and also provided unbiased alternatives.

#### 4.8.2.2: Learners of English as an additional language.

Most of the observations made regarding learners of English as a first language apply to those learning it as an additional language. In the latter case, multiple cultures are usually also in play. Quite regrettably, the English language has any number of words and expressions that *other* anyone who isn’t *obviously* Anglo-American. What about learners of English who encounter expressions that are utilised to demonise and denigrate a group that they themselves belong to? How might a Hispanic person learning English feel when reading this paraphrase of meaning for *greaser*, from the *Oxford Living Dictionaries online*, after being called one, or witnessing how a friend, family member, or other Hispanic person was so insulted?

“US informal, offensive A Hispanic American, especially a Mexican<sup>254</sup>.”

There is just that for this sense, and nothing more.

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<sup>254</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190509182827/https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/greaser>



This can be contrasted with what an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary has to offer:

**greaser** *n* Offensive and denigrating term to refer to or address a person of Hispanic descent, especially Mexican. Evokes images of extreme filth, be it moral and/or corporal. The term may have originated as a reference to the menial job of greasing the axles of mule carts, an unpleasant task performed by Mexican labourers, but more likely from the way ignorant people “saw” an imaginary resemblance between the colour of the skin of Mexican people and grease.

As [Fairclough \(1989:1\)](#) wisely stated: “*consciousness is the first step towards emancipation.*” Although the hatred, vilification, and racism will still be there whenever hate-filled chauvinists spit out this slur, a Mexican, other Hispanic person, or anyone reading this paraphrase of meaning and illustration will obtain a great deal of insight into how *othering* works in the English language and culture. An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary provides the kind of understanding that helps all users, learners of the language or otherwise, to express themselves more inclusively. The added awareness that an inclusive and bias-free expression lexicon provides promotes communication that reflects more empathy, which helps liberate everyone. Even the offenders can benefit, as treating others with more regard reduces fear and hate in *both* directions.

[Tarp and Gouws \(2012\)](#) make the distinction between three general groups of language learners, identifying *beginners*, *experienced learners*, and *advanced learners* as the lexicographic three-step graduation of proficiency levels, although they do remark that this scale may need additional levels between these.

In the case of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, the learners’ levels of intelligence, maturity, and empathy for others, which naturally vary from person to person, would also have a bearing on how user levels may be described. There are also many people who have a gift for language acquisition, and can attain native-speaker proficiency levels in languages other than those they have been brought up with.

[Tarp \(2004\)](#) points out that certain groups, such as those forced out of their countries on account of the war and political repression inherent in neoliberal globalisation, may be reluctant to learn the oppressor’s language, but, that they anyway have to for their “new life.”



Whether they were peacefully living in their homeland (e.g. Native Americans), or elsewhere (territories colonised, and the like), countless people are forced to use the oppressor's language. [Spring \(2016\)](#) has plenty to say on this matter, including:

- School policies in the United States are designed to strip away any cultural and linguistic traditions of those imperialistically conquered.
- The dominant (conquering) group forces their language and culture upon their victims.
- These victims have included Native Americans, enslaved Africans, and Hispanic Peoples.
- As a whole, non-English linguistic and cultural rights are nullified within the USA, and overseas as a part of the USA's imperialistic globalisation and imperialistic pursuits.

This all points towards the need for learners of the English language, “already ‘here’ or arriving,” to necessarily being equipped with additional knowledge. It would be of great benefit to any such learners to know what is truly going on<sup>255</sup>, and not just get the “we are assuming you will be assimilated without resistance” paraphrases of meaning and explanations the regular dictionaries provide.

Similarly to the way [Tarp \(2004\)](#) suggests that lexicographers preparing learner's dictionaries for immigrants and refugees should address specific information needs, such as lemmas related to applicable laws and cultural phenomena, those writing inclusive and bias-free usage ones should attend to social and cultural realities. Just because a person is obligated to learn the language of the oppressor, or any additional language utilised by a conquering land for that matter, does not mean that they must also propagate biased and exclusive usage. Be they children or adults, once they attain a given level of linguistic proficiency along with a familiarity with lexicographical reference works, especially dictionaries, inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries can be a part of their lives. Depending on their age and lifestyle, this may include schoolwork, job-related training, or simply understanding the English language and culture better.

#### **4.8.2.3: High school (or secondary school) students.**

By the time students are in high school, they should have attained a good degree of language aptitude, and an acquaintance with lexicographical reference works, perhaps even including bias-free expression dictionaries, as a part of their assortment of academic tools.

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<sup>255</sup> It is a benefit to all learners and users of English, of course, but in this section we are dealing with a specific group.

In their day to day schoolwork there will regularly be extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative situations where inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries will be helpful. These include vocabulary-enhancement lessons, writing assignments, and perhaps even courses that focus on bias and exclusion. Amongst the latter there might be, for instance, *real* history courses, as opposed to those which they are usually taught, in which colonisation, imperialism, oppression, and othering are glorified. By now students might also have the maturity and understanding that allows them to develop a disdain for bias and exclusion, and to want something more than what has brought us to where we are.

[Loewen \(2018\)](#) wrote on teaching history as it *truly* happened, as opposed to how it is usually taught. Here are a few highlights:

- History was and is still used primarily to keep students ignorant about the past, through deception and outright lies.
- So that “Americans” can consider themselves “good people,” the murder and other evils of their past *must* be covered up. For instance, by making it *seem* like:
  - the land was “legitimately” taken from the Native Americans
  - that blacks didn’t mind being slaves
  - that there were no whites opposed to slavery
- He mentioned how opponents to textbooks that described events the way they really happened claim that the truth would provoke race riots. The truth being, for instance, how lynchings (of black people) were a form of public murder that was perpetrated with such impunity, that members of the murdering community (all white people) might even pose coolly for pictures at these “social events.”
- Black people who did notable things were kept out of history books, rendering them invisible.
- Native Americans are portrayed as unintelligent and uncivilised, as “immortalised,” for instance, by the “primitive Indian” in a loincloth “selling Manhattan for \$24” to a fully clothed “civilised Dutchman.”
- “Pseudo-history” textbooks taught and teach history from the perspective of white supremacists.
- In the best of cases, history books are a collection of facts, completely ignoring the cultural and social causation.
- Students, be they black, Hispanic, or otherwise, who are in *out-groups*, understandably can hate history courses intensely, and unsurprisingly get low grades, marks, or assessments in

them. Even many white students are getting weary with what are becoming ever more obvious lies.

- He summarised his assessment of how history and social studies are taught as **BS: *Bad Sociology***.

Teaching history and social studies in an unbiased and inclusive manner is better for all the pupils, regardless of their “ethnic” group or nationality (etc.), and for society in general. Students should be treated with honesty and respect throughout their schooling. By the time they are in high school, even if they are still being taught to believe in delusions and lies, they might want to improve their awareness of what has been, and still is going on, on their own if need be.

As mentioned earlier, members of a society where a *dictionary culture* prevails should ask themselves: “*how can I solve this specific information need with a dictionary?*” In this specific instance, for example, one might take a two-tiered approach:

- 1) To access Kutler’s [Dictionary of American history \(2003\)](#), which is a monument to the truth, the reversal of indoctrination, and to the lexicographical completion of massive undertakings, as opposed to wading through the historical **BS** (*Bad Sociology*) in “American” “history” books, and in general, including that portrayed through the mass media.
- 2) To help identify and better understand the use of language as an othering and oppression weapon, as exposed by an *inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary*.

The following also serves as an example of a *dictionary culture* in action:

[Gouws \(2013\)](#) states that within a *dictionary culture* users know that dictionaries are practical tools, and that they also know how to use specific lexicographical tools in specific settings. These specialised dictionaries must be planned and written in a manner that addresses the specific needs of the intended users. [Gouws \(2013\)](#) encourages theoretical and practical lexicographers to pay particular attention to the use of lexicons in schools, as instrumental in establishing and furthering a *dictionary culture*. A key lesson for students to learn is that the utilisation of dictionaries should blend seamlessly with the employment of other reference tools. He goes on to assert that the teaching of lexicographical competence in schools should

extend beyond language for general purposes dictionaries, to languages for specific purposes lexicons. There will be more on dictionary typology in Chapter Five.

#### 4.8.2.4: University (or college) students.

All that has been stated on user groups so far, including the specific examples, applies as well to university students. In high school, pupils can *hope* for being treated with honesty and maturity. In college, they should *expect* this. By now, students ought to be at an intellectual and maturational level that includes a given amount of independent thinking, despite the propaganda that they may have been subjected to until this stage of their education.

Earlier in this chapter, the description of user experiences with the essay on “*The relevance of marriage in the 21st century*” served to exemplify the kind of cognitive and communicative extra-lexicographical situations that undergraduate students may encounter, which would particularly benefit from the use of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Bias-free and inclusive oral and written expression is so fundamental to human interrelations, that it should be considered a part of the general culture awareness that college graduates are expected to have.

As a part of the maturational, intellectual, and critical development that college students should manifest, a contempt for what is superficial, contrived, and biased ought to be gathering force. Their increased comprehension of cultural and social realities, along with how real people are harmed and forced to live in fear, might motivate students to sharpen their awareness of the customs and language that serve to oppress and other. This in turn might again beg the question, “*how can I solve this specific information need with a dictionary?*,” with the answer being: by consulting an inclusive and bias-free expression lexicon. They may also have areas of particular interest, such as racism, and browse through the lexicon accordingly. Electronic dictionaries make searching for any word or expression anywhere in the article (not just by listed lemma) quite simple. Dictionaries that enable users to easily find what is needed promotes their continued use, and foster a *dictionary culture* in general. There will be more on how electronic and online dictionaries enhance the user experience in Chapter Five.

#### 4.8.2.5: Graduate (or post-graduate) students.

All that has been stated, including the specific examples, for the other academic groups applies as well to graduate students.

If high school pupils can hope for being treated with honesty and maturity, and in college to be able to expect this, then graduate students should be looking for ways to meaningfully help society with their *own* work. As undergraduates they can “rage against the system,” which is good, but as graduates they might also consider how they themselves may help remedy specific problems. Of course, high schoolers and undergraduates may also do so.

A doctoral dissertation based on *next-level research*, for instance, ought to strive not only to make a singularly valuable contribution within their own realm of expertise, but to also positively impact society as a whole. Eloquently exposing, describing, and illustrating what ails society can make a real difference, as shown in the literature cited in Chapters Two and Three.

Although this would be particularly applicable to graduate work in the social sciences and humanities, it is relevant to all courses of study. To exemplify with just one out of many realms of expertise, there are many expressions that denigrate, demonise, and/or *other* in relation to the health sciences. Here is very small sampling to help illustrate how seemingly innocuous everyday expressions may incorporate bias and exclusion, even if not intended. These expressions are as much at home at a medical school, in a hospital, or “on the street:”

**anorexic** *n* – *person with anorexia, person*. Unless something pertinent is being discussed in an informed, mature and caring manner, such as any combination of the complex individual, cultural, social, genetic, and household factors that play a role in anorexia, whether a person is *anorexic* should not be an issue. In most cases, labelling a person perceived as being thin or underweight as *anorexic* is an incorrect generalization. Just using *person* suffices.

**confined to a wheelchair** – *wheelchair user*. Insinuates that using a wheelchair is tantamount to relinquishing freedom. In reality, wheelchairs can make a meaningful difference in the safety, comfort, and independence of those who employ them.

**defective child** – *child with a congenital impairment, child*. A term that not only brands, but that also connotes that somehow the child is to be blamed for a genetic flaw. Using *child* should be fine in most any setting.

**disabled person** – *person with a disability, person with specific needs, person with special needs, person with unique needs, person*. A stigmatizing label whose effect can be diminished by emphasizing the person. In nearly all cases, *person* works out great.

**family burden** – *requiring family support*. Changing the phraseology helps reflect a more positive and caring attitude.

**woman doctor** – *doctor*. Gratuitously specifying the gender suggests that women in such a profession is an oddity and/or that their judgment and actions might be questionable. When it is necessary to make reference to the gender, as in a patient's preference, *female doctor* is a non-biased expression, as would be *male doctor* (as opposed to *man doctor*).

There will be a complete analysis of the article structure of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary in Chapter Five.

Recognising the profound link between teaching, learning, intersectionality, and language, the *Stanford Graduate School of Education* has a doctoral programme dedicated to this:

***Cross-Area Specialization - Race, Inequality, and Language in Education (RILE)***<sup>256</sup>

The rationale and description of their programme starts so:

*“The challenges and successes of children, schools, and communities are the result of dynamic forces that span life in school and out. Social and cultural factors, economic disparities, racial and linguistic discrimination, and subtle psychological messages interact to shape teaching and learning in schools<sup>257</sup>.”*

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<sup>256</sup> Although the *Stanford Graduate School of Education* does not mention it, to ***rile*** is to make *angry*, and effective work on inclusiveness is best performed by people with authentic *anger* against all that is unfair and oppressing,

<sup>257</sup> Permalink: <https://web.archive.org/web/20190512085933/https://ed.stanford.edu/academics/doctoral/rile>

Need anything further be said about the innumerable *cognitive* and *communicative* extra-lexicographical situations leading to the continuous use of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, that would be an integral part of this graduate programme? The *regular* English dictionaries would still have a place there, but only for that which is *general*. The *inclusive and bias-free expression* lexicon would take care of that which is *specific* to their needs.

#### 4.8.2.6: Scholarly researchers.

Scholarly researchers are the most advanced user group for inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries. Like all users, they need authoritative and bias-free paraphrases of meaning and illustrations, but this group is the likeliest to maximise the use of such lexicons, as will be detailed in this segment.

As evidenced in Chapter Three, many scholars are aware of the bias and exclusion of expressions that the general English language dictionaries are apparently oblivious to. This makes sense, since this user group is perhaps not only the likeliest to be cognisant of the nuances of the language, but to also be working towards a more inclusive society through the eradication of language that others and oppresses. Next-level scholars are aware that everything is interrelated, have the desire to make meaningful positive contributions, and are committed to furthering an inclusive society.

As a part of their research and output:

- 1) Scholars usually want to be as precise as possible when identifying the key concepts they work with, but risk incorporating expressions that are not yet utilised commonly enough to be immediately recognised and understood by colleagues working in other fields of expertise, or even in their own.
- 2) Since they are focused on identifying timely issues, performing quality research, and sharing the fruits of their labour, they are not ordinarily concerned with connecting words with their paraphrases of meaning, to linking concepts with specific expressions, or to helping to standardise usage.
- 3) Despite this, they are probably aware that in order to help effect a change, that the terminology that they employ needs to be understood not just by the colleagues they

meet in the conferences and on campus, but also by those who are working in diverse areas of bias and exclusion, and for that matter by anyone who cares about these matters and also wants to help improve things.

So, in addition to the customary cognitive and communicative extra-lexicographical situations that would bring on a consultation, scholars have additional needs as dictionary users. One of the main benefits of an electronic or online dictionary is the ability to not just find words and expressions by searching for lemmas, but to also be able to find words and expressions by entering words that appear anywhere in the paraphrases of meaning, examples, or elsewhere in the articles. This functionality provides solutions for all three instances above, as scholars may now, with the assistance of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries:

- 1) See if the expressions they are using are indeed amongst the listed lemmas, and
- 2) not have to worry whether they are using obscure terms, since
- 3) they can simply connect words with their paraphrases of meaning, link concepts with specific expressions, and either use standardised *inclusive* expressions, or encourage their use.

Even beyond this, scholarly researchers are also perhaps the likeliest of all user groups to engage in purely lexicographical experiences. These could arise mostly on account of three user desires:

- Scholars may want to look up expressions related to their realm of expertise, to see what's new, and to find and use even more precise terminology.
- Scholars may want to look up expressions in general, so as to make their research more accessible to more scholars looking to improve society, regardless of the field they may be in.
- Scholars may want to browse such lexicons, for the pleasure of it, to further enhance their awareness of biased expression and how it works.

So, why settle only for serving their needs for what they *have* to do? Why not also be prepared to offer them what they might *wish* to do as well? Such scenarios also fit in nicely within *next-level research*.



As writers of the most authoritative and trusted language reference books (and for many people, *the* most reliable sources of information), lexicographers are in a position to make any number of meaningful contributions toward the reduction of biased and exclusive usage.

An indispensable part of this is for lexicographers to closely examine the literature, locating the words and expressions that arise organically, providing paraphrases of meaning for them based on their current usage, and presenting the terminology together in one convenient and elegant package. This helps researchers in general to work better individually and collectively.

Here is how this works, in more detail:

- Expressions are identified and incorporated into lexicons as lemmas, which are therefore able to be found.
- Since these expressions are found, they are then in a position to be utilised.
- As a consequence of expressions being utilised, their use becomes more widespread.
- As they continue to be circulated, expressions become standardised.
- As expressions become standardised, they make for an immediate and full understanding.
- As a result, researchers spend more time on research, and less on figuring out what the others are talking about, since they are now sharing a common terminology.
- This is a part of the *next-level research* synergy described earlier. This synergy means that everyone provides an even more useful output.
- If the researchers can so benefit, then so will those accessing said literature.
- Society as a whole benefits.

Many academics, scholars, students, and others understand that in order to eradicate social problems, these must first be identified and exposed. If they were to have a lexicon with precisely defined words and expressions as they are currently utilised in the relevant literature, they would be able to save time and effort, making for happy users which are then more productive researchers. Other user groups, such as students and writers, may also enjoy “just browsing.”

#### **4.8.2.7: Going beyond a successful search.**

When consulting inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, users might have even higher expectations than when accessing regular dictionaries. The more aware that users are of concepts such as sociolinguistics and intersectionality, the more demanding they will be.

If inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries provide the authoritative and trusted coverage expected from them, then said lexicons, be they in electronic or paper form, will be ever closer to always being at the fingertips of users.

When such dictionaries go beyond comprehensive coverage, to also provide highly readable paraphrases of meaning, eminently relevant explanations and illustrations, along with unbiased and inclusive alternatives, then users will be getting what they need, so they will keep coming back for more. As they incorporate inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries into their daily life, a *dictionary culture* is furthered.

#### 4.8.2.8: Other users.

There are myriad extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative situations where specific information needs can be quickly and properly addressed only through the use of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Here is a very brief rundown of some more user groups that will benefit from the use of such a lexicon:

- **Writers of all persuasions**, including editors, journalists and reporters, authors of textbooks, dramatists, screenwriters, novelists, essayists, poets, critics, legislators, and so on, who choose to use unbiased and inclusive language.
- **Language and media practitioners**, who play a critical role in shaping the way a society thinks and acts, through writing that may (or preferably does not) promote the maintenance of the established order through messages that encourage othering and oppression.
- **Professionals of all kinds**, such as those in the legal profession, where everything written or otherwise imparted by attorneys, judges, ancillary personnel and others may have a monumental influence on many lives. In addition, numerous legal educators and students may find such lexicons extremely helpful. The same could also be said about almost any field of expertise, from medicine through marketing.
- **Learners and users of English as an additional language as adults, or outside of an academic setting**, that need to have a reliable source that describes things as they truly are, to avoid offending others, committing regrettable errors, fostering misunderstandings, and unwittingly propagating stereotypes and prejudices.

- **Individuals from all walks of life**, such as those who wish to express themselves in a manner that further reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others. Such lexicons would be a valuable resource that complements and enhances even finely-honed communicative skills. It would also accommodate the needs of those who are already careful in the way they express themselves, as such people are always on the lookout to optimise their communications dexterity.

#### 4.9: Chapter Four conclusions:

This chapter started with a look at aspects of the *function theory* of lexicography, which can be summarised in this manner: dictionaries should properly address the specific information needs of specific users under specific extra-lexicographical circumstances, and be quick and easy to use.

Then, fundamental aspects regarding the *search process* in relation to the *user experience* were explored, as applicable to an inclusive and bias-free usage dictionary, focusing on four parameters: the *search route*, the *search steps*, the *search speed*, and the *search time*.

After this, situations leading to consulting an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary were identified, each emphasising their cultural and social relevance, on the basis of specific *extra-lexicographical cognitive and communicative* user informational needs. Among these was a detailed example illustrating their relevance to the *function theory* and the *search process*.

There was then a segment on *lexicographers as real people*, and how in order to genuinely address user needs, users need to not just be *identified*, but to also be *understood*. There will be more on this topic, and how *content* is influenced, in Chapter Five.

Purely lexicographical situations were presented as well, along with continued illustrations of the place such dictionaries would have within, and to encourage, a *dictionary culture*. In a nutshell, where a *dictionary culture* is concerned, the key question is: “*how can I solve this specific information need with a dictionary?*” In this chapter we saw many instances where the answer is: “*consult an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.*”

As demonstrated in Chapter Three, the general English dictionaries do not get the job properly done when it comes to biased and exclusive usage. As far as the needs of users are concerned,

inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries would fill a current void, which would lead to the utilisation of these lexicons. As more users continue to consult such works, each time getting what they need, they would eventually go on to incorporate these dictionaries into their daily lives. In this manner, the part these lexicons play within a *dictionary culture* is fulfilled.

Aspects beyond a successful search were also explored, underscoring the importance of presenting highly readable paraphrases of meaning and particularly relevant explanations and illustrations, along with unbiased and inclusive alternatives.

The main section of the chapter was dedicated to the various *user groups* inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries would be prepared for. These include:

- Learners in academic settings, in general.
- Learners in academic settings, specifically:
  - Learners of English as a first language.
  - Learners of English as an additional language.
  - High school (or secondary school) students.
  - University (or college) students.
  - Graduate (or post-graduate) students. In this segment, a doctoral programme completely devoted to intersectionality and language was highlighted.
- Scholarly researchers, the most advanced group, was looked into in detail, including the possibility of their enjoying purely lexicographical experiences.

Finally, other users of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries were also briefly looked at, namely:

- Writers of all persuasions, along with language and media practitioners.
- Professionals of all kinds.
- Learners and users of English as an additional language as adults, or outside of academic settings.
- Individuals from all walks of life, such as those who wish to express themselves in a manner that further reflects respect, consideration, and regard for others.

Biased dictionary coverage was perhaps “understandable” by most in the past, and still by many in the present, but, it must be done away with if lexicographers are to do their part in our society becoming more egalitarian.

The goal of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is to help effect real-world changes by enhancing the awareness of how power, privilege, oppression, and othering work, and to fight oppression on an individual, institutional, and cultural level. For this, bias and exclusion must be identified (lemmas appear), described (paraphrases of meaning given), and illustrated (real-life examples and consequences provided). Plus, bias-free and inclusive alternatives must be given, where applicable.

Through the continued use of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, the bigger picture showing the connectedness of all biased and exclusive usage is ever more apparent. For example, these lexicons would go beyond showing how the expression ***boys will be boys*** serves as a “poster child” for all that is wrong with *patriarchy*, *male hegemony*, *gender roles*, *victimisation of females*, and the *gender binary*. They would also demonstrate how the ***boys will be boys mindset*** promotes a ***rape culture***. These dictionaries would also reveal how the social and cultural objectives of the hurling of hate-filled slurs such as ***nigger***, ***spic***, and ***bitch*** are more intimately related than first perceived, that ***senior moment*** encourages not just ageist stereotypes, but all clichéd conceptions, and so on.

This linguistic othering and oppression can only be change from the *inside*. Getting unbiased and inclusive paraphrases of meaning helps enhance understanding and awareness, which then fosters not speaking or writing in a biased and exclusive manner. Not using this othering and oppressive language promotes not thinking in such terms, which in turn translates into not acting this way. As more and more people express themselves in an unbiased and inclusive manner, others are inspired to do so as well.

## Chapter Five – The hardcore lexicographical aspects of an inclusive and bias-free lexicon, including *typology*, *structures*, and *functions*.

### 5.1: Introduction.

In Chapter Three, the types of lemmas an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would feature were enumerated, and eight example expressions were utilised to assess the effectiveness of twelve general English language dictionaries from the inclusion/exclusion perspective. In Chapter Four, the users of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries were identified, as were their specific information needs, and how these would be met quickly and easily.

A sound theoretical base is indispensable for the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, so here in Chapter Five practical lexicographers are provided with the remainder of what they need in order to prepare such a lexicon, proceeding from the general to the specific. The *typology*, *structures*, *functions*, and *content* will be thoroughly discussed, along with *lexicographers as real people*, followed by a commentary on the benefits of *electronic resources*, suggestions for *derivative works*, and a rundown of the *contemplative and transformative characteristics* of the theoretical model presented here.

Since this would be a new kind of dictionary, one in which bias and exclusion are *identified*, *described*, and *illustrated*, lexicographers preparing such a work should benefit from the added awareness provided by the real-life scenarios and thorough explanations seen throughout this dissertation. The dissertation as a whole can be a significant part in helping lexicographers to shape a less biased and therefore more inclusive reality through their work, and to stop serving as representatives of the established order through their lexicons.

### 5.2: *Typology* of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

The lemmas appearing in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be taken from the lexicon of the general language; therefore it would be an LGP (*language for general purposes*) dictionary, as opposed to an LSP (*language for special purposes*) one, as per the distinctions made by [Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995\)](#).

Furthermore, since biased and/or exclusive expressions represent a subset of the vocabulary of the English language, this would therefore be a *restricted* lexicon. So, more specifically, this would be a *restricted LGP dictionary*.

[Zgusta \(1971\)](#) distinguishes between *diachronic* and *synchronic* dictionaries, and since such a dictionary would focus on the language as it currently exists, it would be a *synchronic lexicon*.

The theoretical model this dissertation provides is for the preparation of a *monolingual* English inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Such a dictionary would be classified within *linguistic lexicography*, as per [Wiegand \(1984\)](#), since it would be a lexicon of the language, and beyond that a reference work providing insight into linguistic expressions. Later in this chapter there will be a section on derivative works, which include *bilingual* lexicons and *thesauri*.

[Bergenholtz \(2003\)](#) goes into great detail where *descriptive*, *prescriptive*, and *proscriptive* dictionaries are concerned, and further subcategorises each with the following descriptors:

- *Open* versus *hidden*, where *open* means that the lexicographer(s) *openly* state their approach in the outer texts. This lexicon would have a front-matter text describing the purposes of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.
- *Total* versus *partial*, where *total* incorporates many or all possibilities, while *partial* offers one or few. In the case of *proscriptive* dictionaries, the former would entail presenting multiple proscriptive possibilities, and the latter one or few.
- *Strong* versus *weak*, where *strong* is based on a wide empirical basis, and the latter on a narrow one. This applies to all lexicons.

Gouws encapsulates the approach here presented, through a personal comment:

*“Proscription has description as a basis. Where a prescriptive approach presents one form and excludes all others and where a descriptive approach presents the different forms without opting for one form, a proscriptive approach negotiates and presents the different forms but recommends one specific form – what you plan to do when recommending an unbiased treatment.”*

So, based on all the above descriptors, we have this:

The theoretical model for the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary offered in this dissertation would be for a *monolingual synchronic English restricted LGP dictionary that is openly, totally, and strongly proscriptive*.

### 5.3: Structures of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

In a precedent-setting paper based mostly on his own previous work (along with that of other visionary metalexicographers including Hausmann), [Wiegand \(1984\)](#) sets forth a general theory of lexicography. This helped set the stage for a deeper analysis of all aspects of dictionary writing, along with the theoretical foundation supporting their preparation, including *structures*.

Within the context of the *function theory* (detailed at the start of Chapter Four), [Nielsen and Fuertes-Olivera \(2005:326\)](#) summarise the role *structures* play: “*the lexicographical structures marshal the data into the task of fulfilling the dictionary function(s). This is the feature that makes it possible to unite the lexicographical data and the function(s) to produce a whole and to operationalize the relation and interaction between data based on specific lexicographical principles.*”

“*Dictionary structures* refer to the *interrelationships of dictionary components.*”  
([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:188\)](#))

Before expounding on the *structures*, here is a selection of germane paraphrases of meaning which should be helpful:

**access structure** “*is the structure of the lexicographical indicators directing the user to the required information. Outer access structure is the structure of the indicators starting on the dictionary cover and directing the user to the individual articles. Inner access structure refers to the arrangement of the indicators directing the user further into the article to the information required.*” ([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:16\)](#)).

**article structure** is where all the items in the article are contained, as well as the structural indicators ([Wiegand, Feinauer and Gouws \(2013\)](#)).

**cross-reference structure** Same as *mediostructure*.



**distribution structure** “is the structure of the linguistic and encyclopedic information distributed across or occurring in different places in the dictionary. Basically, this information may occur in three different places: in the individual articles, in different types of framed articles, or in a separate component”... “references may be made from the dictionary to existing reference books.” ([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:188\)](#)).

**frame structure** “is used to refer to the arrangement in the dictionary of words list(s) and outside matter.” ([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:15\)](#)). [Gouws \(2001:104\)](#) highlights that the lexicographic concept of a frame structure was developed by [Kammerer and Wiegand \(1998\)](#), and that it “creates the opportunity for a more comprehensive application of front and back matter texts, which further improves the accessibility of dictionaries.” ([Gouws, 2001:104](#)). Also called **megastructure**.

**macrostructure** “In the majority of dictionary types lexicographers employ the macrostructure as an ordering structure to present lemmata as guiding elements of their respective dictionary articles.” [Gouws \(2014:158\)](#)

**mediostructure** “cross-reference structure is a lexicographical term for the arrangement of those explicit indicators that direct the user within the dictionary for additional or supplementary information over and above that already found at the first lookup.” ([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:16\)](#)). Also called **cross-reference structure**, or **mesostructure**.

**megastructure** Same as **frame structure**.

**mesostructure** Same as **mediostructure**.

**microstructure** In a personal comment, Gouws offers this: “The microstructure is an ordering structure containing the different items in an article. There are different types of microstructures, e.g. integrated and non-integrated microstructures.”

**outer texts, outer matter, or outside matter** “designed to provide additional information for lexical entries, in the form of front matter, middle matter<sup>258</sup> and back matter.” ([Yihua and Qiping \(2010:179\)](#))

**reference structure** “is the structuring of the explicit and implicit indicators directing the user from one place in the dictionary to another.” ([Bergenholtz and Tarp \(1995:188\)](#)). This is best performed by the **mediostructure**.

The following subsections cover the **structures** in detail, proceeding from the general to the specific. Please note that in the section on *electronic resources* there are also comments on *structures*, as they apply to this medium specifically.

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<sup>258</sup> Also called *inside matter*.

### 5.3.1: *Frame structure (megastructure).*

The *frame structure (megastructure)* consists of the central word list with the article stretches plus the *outer texts*, each of which will be described in the next sections.

### 5.3.2: *Outer texts of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary:*

An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be a ready reference, and as such should not require users to consult any *outer texts* (front, middle, or back matter, or any other supplementary material) in order to be utilised effectively. Each article would have what users need, with everything clearly presented. Further insight could be obtained by accessing other lemmas if desired. In an electronic version, all the lemmas in the central list would be hyperlinked, so clicking through to any other desired articles would be quite simple. Nevertheless, despite *outer texts* not needing to be read to properly use the lexicon, they would anyway have a productive place in such a dictionary.

[Gouws \(2010:60\)](#) states the following:

*“In a general learners’ dictionary the outer texts can play a vital role in the transfer of data, especially to support the user in getting familiar with systematic aspects of the specific language, e.g. its grammar and its pronunciation, but also with cultural values, etc.”*

How would this apply to an inclusive and bias-free expression lexicon? There are variable amounts of bias and exclusion in the way most people express themselves. Since regard and respect are indispensable for effective communication, bias-free and inclusive expression might be considered to be such a significant enhancement to the language, that it has parallels with learning it, regardless of how proficient a person already is in English. Such topics, for instance, could be elaborated on in the preface.

An old and tired cliché goes:

*“It’s not what you say, but how you say it.”*

When it comes to bias-free and inclusive expression, within a sociolinguistic and sociocultural framework that includes analytical methods such as critical discourse analysis, critical reality awareness, and intersectionality, the vastly improved version might be:

***“It’s not only what you say, but how you say it, and within which context.”***

Which leads to the *cultural values* part, which may also be explored in the *outer texts* of an inclusive and bias-free expression lexicon. Pretty much anything that was described in detail in Chapter Two would have a place in the outer texts of such a lexicon. Within a *dictionary culture* described in Chapter Four, lexicons would be a key part of learning, and perhaps even be the hub around which other reference materials revolve. Other topics that could be amply dealt with in detail in the *outer texts* include how *speciesism* and *sexism* are related, or how all forms of *oppression* and *othering* are connected. In addition, illustrative texts, such as those seen in Chapters Two and Three, could also be included in the outer texts, similarly to the way general English dictionaries may have a section on sample personal and business correspondence, dialogue for hypothetical “everyday” conversational settings, and the like.

[Gouws \(2010:61\)](#) goes on to state:

*“Lexicographers of future specialised monolingual dictionaries for learners should utilise the outer texts in a much more creative and innovative way. Once again the lexicographic functions of the dictionary should play a determining role in the selection and presentation of the outer texts. They should also contribute to achieving the functions of the dictionary in order to ensure a transtextual approach to lexicographic functions.”*

Again, these key concepts in lexicography may be utilised to inspire and guide lexicons of other natures, including an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Where inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries are concerned, these *outer texts* would complement the *functions* enumerated in Chapter Four, but must still allow for the fully effective use of such a lexicon if users choose not to read these materials.

In a personal comment, Gouws relates the role *outer texts* play and the *data distribution structure* of a dictionary:

*“The planning of the outer texts is done in accordance with the data distribution structure. Certain types of data are not lemma- or article-specific and an outer text provides an ideal venue. Outer texts could also be used to accommodate additional reading matter regarded as relevant by the lexicographer. A systematic introduction to the dictionary and a clear set of user guidelines should also find a place in the outer texts.”*

[Gouws \(2006\)](#) then situates these within a *dictionary culture*:

*“Users in an environment where a dictionary culture thrives, should be made aware that the dictionary as a carrier of text types has much more on offer than the data included in the central list.”*

### 5.3.3: *Outer access structure, and macrostructure.*

In Chapter Four, the *search route* (or *access route*), *search steps*, *search speed*, and *search time* were described in detail, as a part of a comprehensive analysis of the *user experience*. The *search route* is determined by the *access structure*, with the latter to now be explored more deeply. The following discussion of the *outer access structure* will be followed by that of the *inner access structure*, later in this section.

As mentioned, although there would be three lemma types serving as guiding elements, one for each of the article types respectively, there would be only *a single word list with an alphabetical ordering of the article stretches and the articles arranged according to the alphabetical value of their guiding elements*. On account of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary having this single alphabetic word list, its *outer access structure* would coincide with its *macrostructure*. This single *outer access structure* for the central list affords several fundamental benefits, including:

- Most dictionary users are accustomed to an A to Z alphabetical format, so there would be no need to explain how to look up lemmas.
- If there were three alphabetically ordered word lists, constituting a macrostructural series, one for biased expressions, another for inclusive ones, and a third for concepts related to bias and exclusion, users might potentially need to perform up to three searches to get where they could have arrived with a single one. No lexicon yet lists inclusive lemmas as a whole; some dictionaries have some inclusive lemmas, but these are so few and far between that it could not be considered to be systematic. The same goes for the incorporation of concepts related to bias and exclusion.
- Just because all lemmas are listed in alphabetically ordered article stretches does not mean that users can't look things up the way *they* want to. A revealing example is how users prefer to look up multiword expressions. For instance, a user may want to gain insight into the concept of a *chilly climate* [within the academic world in general, and

within specific academic settings in particular.] Some users might look up this lemma starting with the noun, as in *climate*, *chilly* while others will look up the expression the way they encounter it: *chilly climate*, which would be its *natural* form. Since an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would have a lemma listed for *both* forms, no user would have to guess which way to look it up. Not having to guess means that there is no possibility of guessing wrong; the latter which would result in wasted time, effort, and patience.

In real life, the expression *chilly climate* is not encountered as *climate*, *chilly*. Such a formulation would be in a dictionary for mainly two reasons, one of which has just been explained. The other is that a user may only recall one word in the expression, and having articles under both helps in countless similar cases.

To further illustrate this, here is how the expression would appear in the lexicon:

### **chilly climate** *n*

#### **Meaning:**

[within the academic world in general, and within specific academic settings in particular] Unfair and/or intimidatory treatment of females that leads them to be less likely to excel at their studies, to pursue their long-term academic aspirations, to secure promotions and grants, and in general to feel welcome in such surroundings.

#### **Insight into the bias:**

A *chilly climate* may entail any number of discriminatory and/or hostile actions, resulting, for instance, in females obtaining lower grades for work of equivalent or better quality than that of males, receiving less encouragement and recognition, getting less favourable peer reviews, feeling inhibited towards making the positive contributions they are capable of, or being sexually harassed or assaulted.

#### **Towards a heightened inclusive awareness:**

The analytical framework that intersectionality provides helps to better understand the aggravated toxic effects a *chilly climate* may have on females that belong to “minority” groups, who are economically poor, not heteronormative, have physical specific needs, and so on, since multiple mechanisms of oppression intersect.

A bit later in the lexicon there would be:

### **climate, chilly** *n*

#### **Meaning:**

[within the academic world in general, and... (*the complete article would appear again*).

What would **not** appear is:

**chilly climate** – please see **climate, chilly**.

nor

**climate, chilly** – please see **chilly climate**.

It is worth noting that this would be the default structure for articles dealing with *concepts related to bias and exclusion*. There will be much more on this in the examples provided for each of three lemma types serving as guiding elements, one for each of the article types respectively, later in this chapter.

In the distant past, with typesetting being such a cumbersome task, providing the full article in both places would have represented an inordinate amount of extra work. In the not too distant past having both might have been considered inefficient. In the present, through electronic media, such a presentation is the way to go. Not even a single extra click of the mouse or extra tap would be needed. The desired article is found the first time around, every time.

Here is another circumstance within which having *both* the *natural* ordering and *non-natural* word orderings appearing in the lexicon would be of benefit:

How about equivalent expressions that appear in the literature and in life in multiple ways? For instance, the expressions ***policing of masculinity*** and ***masculinity policing*** are the exact same thing. In an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary each would have its lemma listing, as opposed to forcing users to look up one or the other. As mentioned, there would be no redirecting elsewhere in the lexicon to get to where the user wanted to be.

Thus, there would be **no** cases like these in such a lexicon:

**policing of masculinity** – please see **masculinity policing**.

**masculinity policing** – please see **policing of masculinity**.

The following illustration highlights another way in which having *both* the *natural* and *non-natural* word ordering serves dictionary users even better:

As explained in Chapter Three, one of the main ways that *hegemonic masculinity* is maintained is through the *policing of masculinity* ([Reigeluth & Addis \(2016\)](#)). Despite the similarity of these expressions, language corpora and lexicographical technology may not detect how interrelated they actually are. Capable lexicographers are still needed to make these more subtle correlations between concepts. Providing both the *natural* and *non-natural* word orderings in a single A to Z format makes the connection between these expressions become readily apparent. The following frame illustrates this:

**masculinity, hegemonic** – the dominance of stereotypical male traits, such as aggression, ambition...

**masculinity, military** – the glorification of violence, misogyny, rape, and destruction within...

**masculinity policing** – the observation and regulation of the activities, conduct, and expression of...

**masculinity studies** – an interdisciplinary field which critically analyses what it purportedly means...

Looking up any of these expressions helps to better conceptualise what a user is reading or hearing about, since adjacent expressions are nearby for immediate correlation, if desired. Reading and comparing nearby articles would enable users to gain an even deeper understanding into the inner workings of bias and exclusion. If the dictionary is also enjoyable to read and is well written, as it ought to be, then such excursions will be encouraged and rewarded. It's all connected, and lexicographers make the links ever more apparent, especially within the *dictionary culture* elucidated in Chapter Four.

[Hausmann and Wiegand \(1989\)](#) make the distinction between a *straight alphabetical ordering* and a *sinuous lemma file*. The latter involves *niching* or *nesting*, where multiple lemmas are combined into a single lemma cluster, with each article having sublemmas. All such clusters have “*a main lemma and the guiding element of an article displaying a full treatment.*” ([Gouws, 2002:143](#)).

As mentioned, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would have a single A to Z listing. That is, a *straight alphabetical ordering*, which means that there would be *no niching, no nesting*, nor any form of *clustering* lemmas together. The more “encyclopaedic”



approach that an inclusive and bias-free usage lexicon would employ anyway makes such groupings of terms particularly unwieldy. As [Gouws \(2001:107\)](#) puts it:

*“A straight alphabetical ordering is much more user-friendly and allows more successful access than an ordering displaying niched and nested lemmata.”*

And that certainly applies to the *typology* and *macrostructure* utilised in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

To conclude, in all instances, no matter how a user chooses to look up an expression, one consultation per search is ideal, and in this case real. So long as the lemma is there, in one simple step the user gets the article with the desired information, which leads time and time again to successful searches, and an ever more positive lexicographic experience. [Wiegand, Feinauer and Gouws \(2013\)](#) go into great detail where the *typology*, *structure*, and *accessibility* of *articles* are concerned, and may be consulted for much more on these topics.

#### **5.3.4: Mediostructure.**

As has been emphasised, one of the objectives of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is to provide users with what they need the first time they search. There should not be the need to turn a single additional page, or even click or tap again, unless they wish to. This is accomplished mainly in two ways:

- By each article having what the user needs, with everything clearly presented in the unambiguously identified *search zones*.
- Through the single A to Z alphabetical macrostructural ordering which includes all three lemma types. Although there will be both *natural* and *non-natural* word orderings, all the articles in the dictionary will appear in one consecutive A to Z access structure.

This means that there would not be a need for any *cross-references*, so there would be none. That said, in a lexicon in electronic form, everything can be cross-referenced. Electronic media takes the *mediostructure* of any quality lexicon to the next level, since now a single click can transfer users to the next place they wish to go. *Cross-referencing* is seamless and all encompassing when there is the ability to click or tap on any *hyperlinked* expression to access the full article. In such a lexicon, all expressions that are lemmas that can be looked up will be hyperlinked. In cases where the *outer texts* have additional relevant data, users would be alerted to this in the “*towards a heightened inclusive awareness*” *search zone*.



### 5.3.5: *Inner access structure, article structure, and microstructure.*

In order to best serve the needs of the users of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, an intuitively logical and clearly demarcated *article structure* is indispensable. There would be three lemma types, each respectively serving as guiding elements for each of the three article types. The *article structure* for each type of lemma will be thoroughly described later in this section, using an example expression for each.

Before detailing on the *search zones*, the *structural indicators* will be covered, all of which are *typographical* and serve to enhance the inner access structure by identifying specific microstructural items. There would not be any *non-typographical structural indicators* in this lexicon.

- As will be seen in the following example expressions, the lemma has a **bold sans-serif** typeface<sup>259</sup> (here it is specifically Helvetica/Arial). Bold stands out, and makes sure that the user knows where to start. This is similar to the approach most lexicons take, so in this regard an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be *contemplative*, as per the typology described by [Tarp \(2008\)](#). There will be a summary of the *transformative* and *contemplative* aspects of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary later in this chapter.
- The part of speech is in *italicised sans-serif*.
- The main part of the article would be entirely in a serif typeface<sup>260</sup> (in this case Roman/TimesRoman/TimesNewRoman).
- Only these two very recognisable and easy to read typefaces would be utilised throughout the dictionary, and nothing would be underlined. Keeping everything clean and simple enhances the user experience.
- Aside from the items giving the part of speech, there would be no abbreviations. That means that users would have less to keep track of, which is especially useful in a quick reference.
- No *non-typographical structural indicators* of any kind would be needed in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Why complicate the user experience unnecessarily?

<sup>259</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190422131321/https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/50800/sans-serif>

<sup>260</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190422131124/https://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia/term/51149/serif>

### 5.3.5.1: Search zones.

Knowledgeable dictionary users will know when they need to consult an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, based on their specific information needs at any given moment. On account of the optimised *outer access structure*, they will also be able to quickly and easily locate the desired article, based on the searched lemma. According to [Wiegand, Beer, and Gouws \(2013:63\)](#), the majority of the items in a dictionary article may be the desired target of a specific search. They go into detail on text segments whose function is to help users find what they need within a given article. In an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, *all* items in an article might be where a user needs to go to serve a punctual information need. On account of the more encyclopaedic approach taken in an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, in order for users to immediately and unequivocally find what they need, only *typographical search zone indicators* would be employed, as will be seen in the examples this section describes in detail.

Articles could contain a total of seven possible *search zones*. Three would be in most articles, a fourth in many, and the rest would appear only as needed. **Table 5:1** summarises these *search zones*, by *lemma type*.

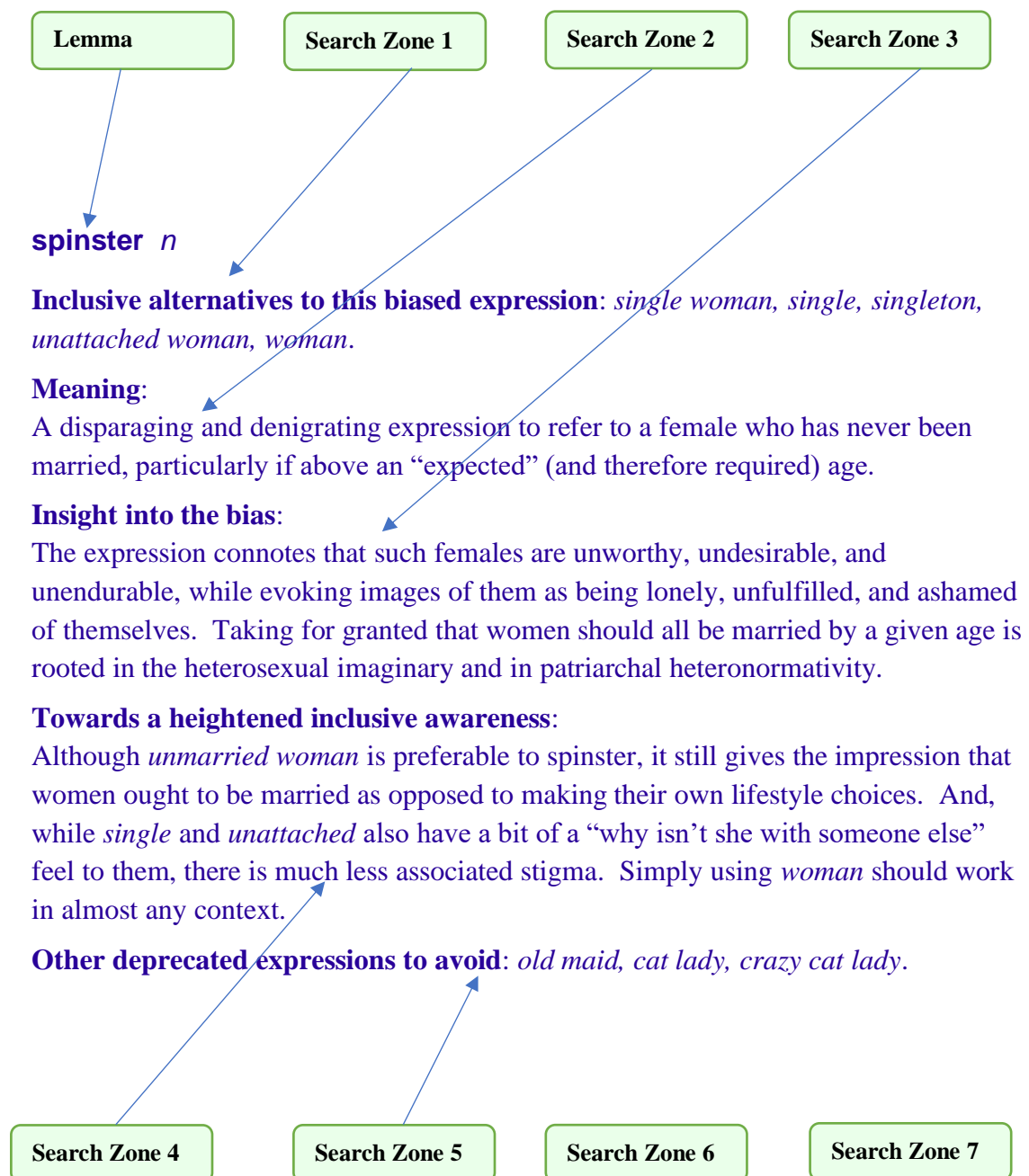
<b>Table 5:1 – Search Zones by Lemma Type:</b>			
<b>Lemma Type</b> ►	<b><i>Biased and exclusive expression</i></b>	<b><i>Bias-free and inclusive expression</i></b>	<b><i>Concept related to bias and exclusion</i></b>
<b>Search Zone 1</b>	Inclusive alternatives to this biased expression	Instead of these deprecated expressions	N/A
<b>Search Zone 2</b>	Meaning	Meaning	Meaning (Zone 1)
<b>Search Zone 3</b>	Insight into the bias	Insight into the inclusiveness	Insight into the bias (2)
<b>Search Zone 4</b>	Towards a heightened inclusive awareness	Towards a heightened inclusive awareness	Towards a heightened inclusive awareness (3)
<b>(If applicable):</b>	<b>(If applicable):</b>	<b>(If applicable):</b>	<b>(If applicable):</b>
<b>Search Zone 5</b>	Other deprecated expressions to avoid	N/A	N/A
<b>Search Zone 6</b>	Also called	Also called (Zone 5)	Also called (4)
<b>Search Zone 7</b>	Additional senses	Additional senses (6)	Additional senses (5)

As seen in this table, there are up to seven possible *search zones* occupied for *biased and exclusive expressions*, six for *bias-free and inclusive expressions*, and five for *concepts related to bias and exclusions*. So, as will be detailed in the following examples for each lemma type, since one or two slots, depending on the lemma type, will not be occupied, then the *search zone number* is adjusted accordingly.

These *search zones*, along with the aforementioned *typographical structural indicators* and *layout features*, will be illustrated by examining articles for each of the three lemma types. The *microstructure* is the complete ordered structure of the items in each article, from the *lemma* through the last *search zone*. The item types that occur in all the articles constitute the *obligatory microstructure*. Articles with additional items will display an *extended obligatory microstructure*. In the suggested *article structure*, the *search zones* following the lemma sign and the item giving the part of speech all have a data-identifying entry in the search zone entrance position. This entry helps the user to immediately access the specific search zone accommodating the data from which the relevant information can be retrieved, ensuring a successful dictionary consultation procedure. This enhances the user-friendliness and accessibility of the dictionary.

Please proceed to the next page, for an example of an *expression that is biased and exclusive*.

### 5.3.5.1.1: An example of an expression that is *biased and exclusive*.



#### Key features of the *article structure* in more detail:

The described *structural indicators* and *layout* are self-evident, so, now on to an in-depth description of the *data-carrying* entries for *biased and exclusive expressions*:

As summarised in **Table 5:1**, there would be up to seven *search zones* for *biased and exclusive expressions*. In the case of *spinster* five of these would be occupied, since *search zones 6 and 7* would not apply to this specific expression. Each of these *search zones* is clearly demarcated and provided with a name. An inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would require more space for its articles, on account of its going further below the surface than regular lexicons do. Since so much more is being offered than in a general dictionary, the inclusion of a few extra words to unambiguously help users to immediately find what they need is worthwhile. Here are detailed comments on the *search zones*:

- **Search Zone 1: Inclusive alternatives to this biased expression.** As demonstrated in Chapters Two and Three, in order to eradicate bias and exclusion, they must be recognised and identified (lemmas appear), explained (given paraphrases of meaning), and illustrated (to provide greater insight), plus better ways to express things must be made available (inclusive alternative provided).
- As seen here, each of these *inclusive* alternatives would be *italicised* to highlight that each of these expressions is a lemma of its own, which may also be looked up.
- In addition, users looking up *spinster* might already suspect that it is a biased expression, and may only want bias-free alternatives to fulfil a punctual information need, and nothing else. So, for them, the inclusive choices are provided immediately. No need to read through, or even scan the article. They can do that if they want to, of course, and the paraphrase of meaning and everything else will be there for them when they need that additional insight.
- **Search Zone 2: A *paraphrase of meaning*<sup>261</sup> for the lemma.** There will be cases where the information need is only the meaning, and this search zone will be immediately located. This will concisely encapsulate the true current usage of the expression, free of bias. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, if a lemma is listed in a regular dictionary, it is usually described in a biased manner.
- **Search Zone 3: The *insight into the bias* search zone** specifically identifies where the bias and exclusion are present. These explanations go beyond paraphrases of meaning, since they specifically identify the vilification, denigration, stereotyping, othering, etc. The best that the regular dictionaries are doing (and in very few cases, at that) is to include an occasional usage note, which may not even get read.

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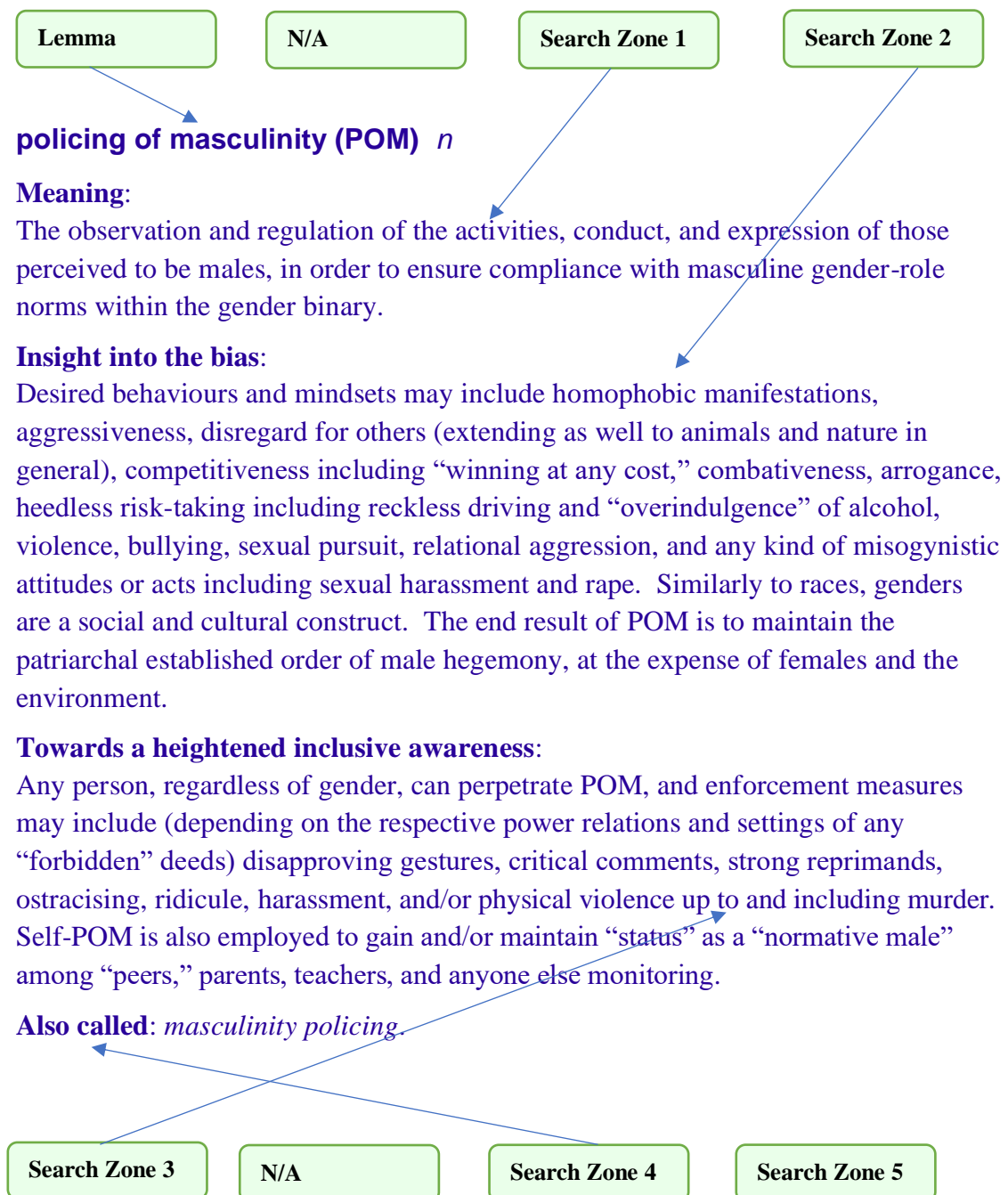
<sup>261</sup> In the actual dictionary, only the word *meaning* will appear to identify this search zone, as seen in the article here presented. Most users will not immediately know what *paraphrase of meaning* signifies, so *meaning* will suffice.

- **Search Zone 4:** In the *towards a heightened inclusive awareness* search zone there is further commentary on the bias and exclusion. It is not enough to *identify* and *explain* where the bias and exclusion are. They must also be *illustrated*, and real-life scenarios and consequences have a way of putting things in their proper perspective. If the information need calls for in-depth knowledge, users will know where to find it, instantaneously.
- **Search Zone 5:** The last search zone applicable to *spinster* is: *other deprecated expressions to avoid*. These deprecated expressions would be italicised to highlight that each of these expressions is a lemma of its own, which may also be looked up if desired. Having their own *search zone* enables users to immediately find them, if that was the punctual information need. Listing these deprecated expression also has its advantages, including the ability to gain even further insight how the language works to oppress and to other. In the case of *spinster*, for instance, to know that such a woman might also be referred to as an *old maid* or a *crazy cat lady* has something to say as well.
- The *also called* search zone does not apply to *spinster*, so it does not appear in the article. This search zone appears in the *policing of masculinity* example, which is next.
- Finally, the *multiple senses* search zone also does not apply to *spinster*, so it does not appear in the article. This search zone appears, though, in the *gender affirmation* example.

Please note that the entries in *search zones* 2 through 4 (*Meaning, Insight into the bias, Towards a heightened inclusive awareness*) are not subjected to procedures of textual condensation. They are presented in natural syntax and function as item texts and not as mere items. The natural syntax of these item texts also plays a role to ensure an optimal retrieval of information from the data on offer in the *search zone*.

Please proceed to the next page, to see an example of a *concept related to bias and exclusion*.

### 5.3.5.1.2: An example of a *concept related to bias and exclusion*.



#### Key features of the *article structure* in more detail:

As summarised in **Table 5:1**, there would be up to five occupied *search zones* for *concepts related to bias and exclusion*, since neither the *search zones* for *inclusive alternatives to this biased expression/instead of these deprecated expressions* nor *other deprecated expressions to avoid* would apply.

In the case of *policing of masculinity* there would be four, since the “*additional senses*” *search zone* would also not apply to this specific expression. Each *search zone* number is adjusted accordingly, as was seen in [Table 5:1](#), and in the following detailed explanation:

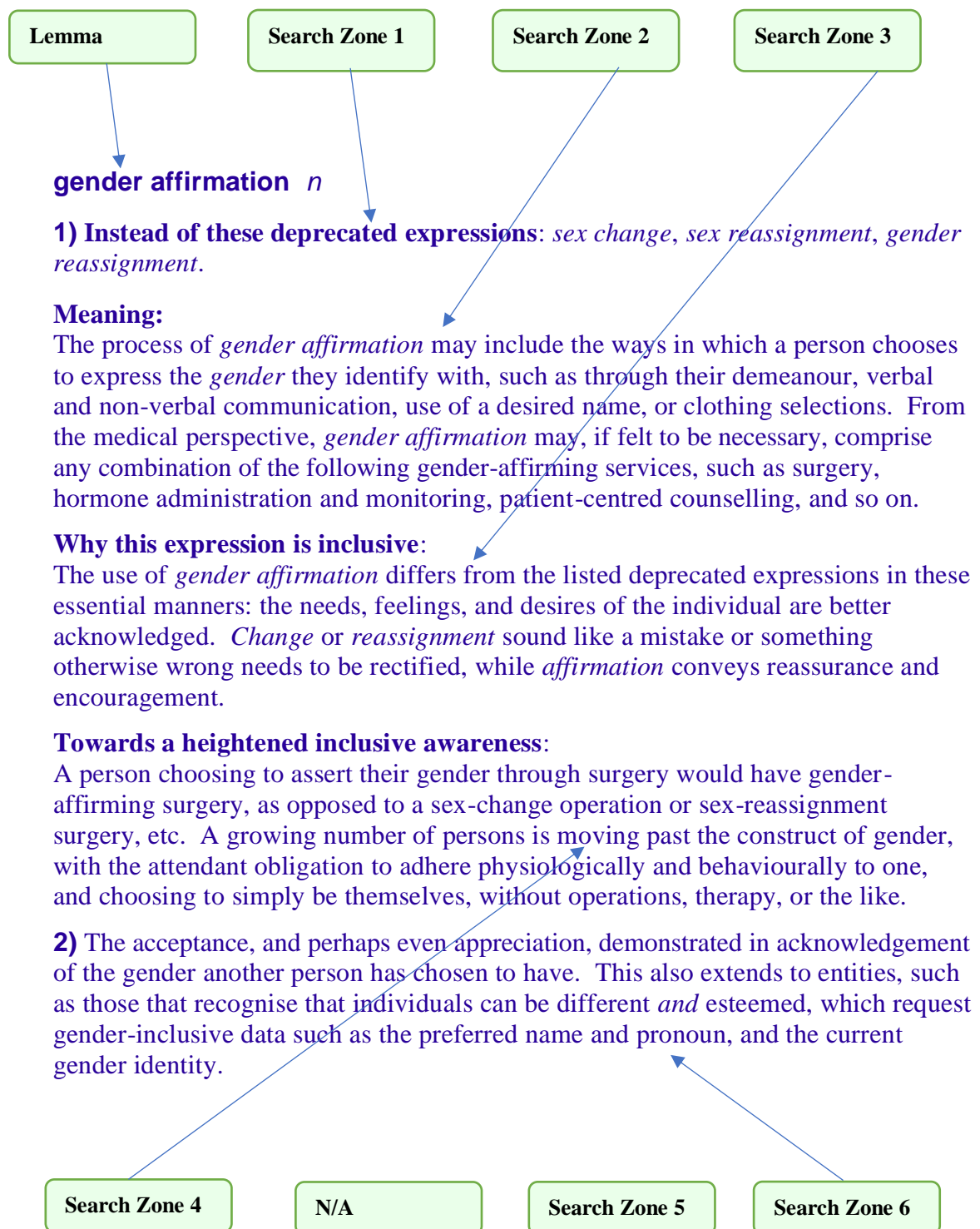
Here are the comments on all the *search zones* for the *policing of masculinity* article:

- As mentioned, since this is a *concept related to bias and exclusion*, there are no *inclusive alternatives to this biased expression*, nor *other deprecated expressions to avoid*. Therefore, for articles of this type, the *paraphrase of meaning* is the first *search zone*.
- *Search zone 1* is explicitly identified, and provides a *paraphrase of meaning* that is not only free of bias, but is also squarely situated within the realm of bias and exclusion. It describes things as they truly are.
- *Search zone 2, insight into the bias*, specifically identifies where the bias and exclusion are present. Since **POM** mandates so many manifestations of toxic conduct, a generous sample of such behaviours is given, so that users can get an authentic feel for the concept.
- In *search zone 3, towards a heightened inclusive awareness*, there is further commentary on the manifestations of **POM**. *Search zone 3* is for those who enjoy digging even deeper into things, to further enhance their awareness of reality and the needs of others.
- Since this is a *concept related to bias and exclusion*, there are no *other deprecated expressions to avoid*.
- In *Search zone 4*, the *also called* search zone, other *equivalent expressions* are provided. These are given so that they may be more easily recognised, and/or if utilisation of any of these alternatives is preferred. In the case of *policing of masculinity* there are two ways to express the exact same concept, and since either one may be encountered, it is best to be aware of both.
- In the case of *policing of masculinity*, *search zone 5* is not occupied, since there are no additional senses.

Please see the next page, for an example of an *expression that is bias-free and inclusive*.



### 5.3.5.1.3: An example of an expression that is *bias-free and inclusive*.



#### Key features of the *article structure* in more detail:

As summarised in **Table 5:1**, there would be up to six *search zones* for *bias-free and inclusive expressions*, since the *search zone* for *other deprecated expressions to avoid* would

not apply. In the case of *gender affirmation* there would be five, since there are no “*also called*” expressions in this case.

Here are the comments on all the *search zones* for the *gender affirmation* article:

- Whether an expression is biased or not, *search zone 1* is always the place users will find *alternative* expressions. While biased and exclusive expressions such as *spinster* have “*inclusive alternatives to the biased expression*,” bias-free and inclusive expressions such as *gender affirmation* have “*instead of these deprecated expressions*.” This *search zone* is not only in the location where users will be expecting it (the experience of a couple searches will suffice), but is also clearly labelled for immediate identification as of the very first search. Besides this, a user looking up *gender affirmation* may only want to contrast biased alternatives to fulfil a punctual information need, and nothing else. So, for them, the *exclusive* expressions are provided immediately. Anytime they want more, it is all there for them in the rest of the search zones.
- *Search zone 2* provides a *paraphrase of meaning* that immediately places the user in the realm of inclusiveness.
- For *biased and exclusive expressions*, *search zone 3* provides “*insight into the bias*.” For *bias-free and inclusive expressions*, *search zone 3* offers “*insight into the inclusiveness*.” So, in each case the user obtains further insight in the “good” or the “bad,” based on the lemma, which is *unbiased* or *biased*, respectively. These explanations go beyond paraphrases of meaning, since they specifically identify the inclusiveness, detail how bias and exclusion are negated, and show how everyone deserves regard.
- “*Towards a heightened inclusive awareness*” (*search zone 4*) is where users know they will get the in-depth knowledge, immediately. In the case of *gender affirmation*, other inclusive expressions closely related to this concept are provided, in order to better equip users in *communicative* situations, and to perhaps even address personal questions a user may have.
- For this type of lemma, there are no “*other deprecated expressions to avoid*.”
- In the case of *gender affirmation*, *search zone 5*, the “*also called*” search zone is not occupied, since there are no such instances for this specific expression.
- *Search zone 6* is where any additional senses for a given expression appear. In the case of *gender affirmation* there is a second sense. Additional senses, if any, will be presented in their own subcomment on semantics.

### 5.3.5.2: A couple of notes on the *layout* of the articles.

In both its print<sup>262</sup> and electronic versions, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would always feature left aligned text (as opposed to justified), which makes it easier to proceed from line to line while reading, regardless of the setting.

Since this lexicon would have articles that tend to be longer than regular English dictionaries, a single column would be the best choice for all versions across all media. Most printed monolingual dictionaries have two, and sometimes more columns, where a justified alignment provides a much tidier appearance. The twelve online dictionaries analysed in Chapter Two all had a single-column format, probably due in good measure to their offering users the possibility of reading only a single article at a time. This in itself attests to the advantages of a single-column layout.

### 5.4: *Functions*.

[Gouws \(2014:134\)](#) emphasises:

*“The success of any dictionary is determined by its use and the way in which its genuine purpose is achieved when consulted by the intended target users. A major assignment of any lexicographer is to plan and compile a dictionary in such a way that the intended target users can achieve an optimal retrieval of information; this will represent a successful dictionary consultation procedure. To achieve this, lexicographers constantly need to look at new possibilities and procedures, e.g. with regard to the development of functions, structures and contents in their dictionaries and also to new modes and means of presenting the data.”*

The previous and current chapters are about what makes for successful consultations by the intended target users, along with the optimal retrieval of lexicographical information.

Lexicographers individually, and lexicography as an art and science, should indeed be ever vigilant to find new ways to better serve their target users. The detailed explanations of the *functions, structures, and contents* provided in the previous and current chapters help evidence how the theoretical model this dissertation provides for the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary makes good on this commitment.

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<sup>262</sup> Please note that although this dictionary might also be offered in a printed format, that such a lexicon is meant primarily to be in electronic form, in order to enable all the benefits mentioned in this Chapter.

The *functions* of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary were summarised in Chapter Four: dictionaries should properly address the specific information needs of specific users under specific extra-lexicographical circumstances, and be quick and easy to use. The particulars of how to accomplish this were also thoroughly explained in Chapter Four, and here in Chapter Five.

As shown in Chapter Three, the regular dictionaries are not only providing biased treatment for the expressions in their central list, they are also neglecting to include many lemmas that would help to highlight the *oppression* and *othering* problems our society has. In this manner, these lexicons are helping to keep these evils invisible.

## 5.5: Content.

The *contents* are related to both the *functions* and the *structures*. Unless the *content* is what the target users need, a lexicon will not fulfil its *functions*. And, if the needed *content* is not provided, then said *structures* would anyway be irrelevant. The next sections explain the decisive influence that *lexicographers as real people* and the *article structure* have on the content of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, and the importance of providing not just quality *or* quantity, but rather both.

### 5.5.1: Content as a function of *lexicographers as real people*.

The *contents* of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary depend not only on lexicographers being accomplished researchers, but also on their being critical and egalitarian thinkers. The *content* of the regular dictionaries was biased, in part, based on their insufficiently critical use of their corpora.

If it were to be the same lexicographers taking the same approach to an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary as with the regular ones, the *content* would be basically the same as their general lexicons. So, what might distinguish the *lexicographers* preparing such *content*, so that it indeed meets the information needs of the target users?

In order to prepare a worthwhile inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, a thorough understanding of bias and exclusion in the language, society, and culture is indispensable.

This insight might be obtained through a combination of all of the following: extensive readings of all kinds of materials in the English language, a vast experience in all language scenarios (active, as in writing, passive, as in watching movies, or both, as in conversational situations) in myriad settings, and above all, an exacting review of the literature detailing bias and exclusion as it relates to multitudinous topics, such as those already seen in Chapters Two and Three of this dissertation.

Lexicographers working on inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries should also be well-versed in sociolinguistics, including *critical discourse analysis*, *critical race theory*, *discourse psychology*, and other methods of examining the language. In addition to being analytical, accomplished researchers, and the like, lexicographers for such dictionaries ought to also possess an awareness and understanding of the feelings and needs of others. That is, they should have a sincere empathy for other people, most especially those that in one way or another have been oppressed, excluded, and/or discriminated against. To help round out their awareness of the consequences of language and power structures, it is necessary to also incorporate *intersectionality*<sup>263</sup> into the mix.

A synergistic amalgam of sociolinguistic tools *and* intersectionality might be called *critical reality awareness*. *Critical reality awareness* can be employed to dissect pretty much any set of linguistic, social, cultural, and behavioural variables, as a part of the deep exploration into how *oppression* and *othering* work. Within a *critical reality awareness framework*, the quotidian realities of those that are victimised are better understood, as is also the perspective of non-oppressing members of “dominant” groups who are willing to contribute towards a more egalitarian society.

As clarified in Chapter Four, if a lexicographer does not “get” the real-life othering and oppression that *intersectionality* entails, then they are not likely to “get” how *critical discourse analysis*, *critical reality awareness*, and other sociolinguistic and sociocultural frameworks function either, since they are all interrelated. If lexicographers, as real people, can not place themselves in the positions of other people and understand them, share their feelings, and care about them, they could follow all the guidelines and suggestions presented in this dissertation and still fail to provide the *content* that will meet the needs of users of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries.

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<sup>263</sup> [Please click on this text for a permalink of an excellent overview of intersectionality provided by Atewologun from the Oxford Research Encyclopedias.](#)

As also mentioned, aptitudes and awareness can certainly be honed, but, when it comes to *empathy*, you either have it or you don't. Without introspection and a sincere empathy for those that in one way or another have been oppressed, excluded, and/or discriminated against, the unbiased and inclusive paraphrases of meaning, along with the accompanying exemplifications, would ring hollow at best, if they were even there.

Finally, in order to bring it all together in one elegant and cohesive package, the ability to correlate language use and its consequences, a knack for writing concise yet thoroughly readable paraphrases of meaning which are supplemented by relevant and vivid examples and illustrations, along with an awareness of non-biased and inclusive alternatives to the biased and/or exclusive expressions, will all be vital.

All of the preceding would help lexicographers to better select the lemmas from the corpora available to them, along with other available sources, such as the literature. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be a *proscriptive* lexicon. With the analytical awareness described in the preceding paragraphs, lexicographers will better provide the selected lemmas the treatment they deserve.

Oxford lexicographers, for instance, who have corpora exceeding 10 billion words<sup>264</sup> along with the latest in lexicographical technology, including their *Lexical Engine and Platform*<sup>265</sup>, were apparently unaware that corpora and the most advanced resources are only a part of the lexicographical picture when it comes to real human beings, real usage, and the real consequences of said usage. In Chapter Three it was demonstrated that their lexicographical coverage from the inclusion/exclusion perspective can be improved upon.

So, here is the starting point for the preparation of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries: *lexicographers* that are devoted to helping effect real-world changes by writing dictionaries that enhance the awareness of how power, privilege, subjugation, and exclusion work, in order to help fight othering and oppression on the individual, institutional, and cultural levels. In order to do so, they must *identify*, *describe*, and *illustrate* where the bias and exclusion are, and provide bias-free and inclusive alternatives.

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<sup>264</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190610180141/https://languages.oup.com/our-story/corpus>

<sup>265</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20190610180234/https://languages.oup.com/our-story/leap>

### 5.5.2: *Content as a function of the article structure.*

As has just been reiterated, the purpose of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is to *identify, describe, and illustrate* bias and exclusion in the language. By writing these dictionaries, lexicographers help to shape a less biased, and therefore more inclusive, reality through their work. As stated, *contents, functions* and *structures* are interconnected. A bit earlier in this chapter, the up to seven *search zones* each article might have were enumerated, with an example provided for each lemma type. Here is a look at each of these, plus the *lemma* and *structural indicators*, to help evidence how the *article structure* itself helps the *content* in achieving the objectives of this lexicon:

- 0) ***Lemma and part of speech:*** unless the lemmas are in the lexicon's central list, the biased expressions are not being *identified* for the users.
- 1) ***Inclusive alternatives for biased expressions/instead of these deprecated expressions*** are provided to help users enhance their inclusive communications skills.
- 2) ***Paraphrase of meaning:*** unless the bias (or inclusion, depending on the expression) is *explained*, how are users supposed to *be aware* of what is really going on?
- 3) ***Insight into the bias/inclusiveness:*** unless the bias/inclusiveness are *illustrated*, how are users supposed to *comprehend* what is truly going on?
- 4) ***Towards a heightened inclusive awareness:*** for dictionary users who “get” how bias and exclusion work, and who want to achieve a further *enhanced* awareness.
- 5) ***Other deprecated expressions to avoid:*** (if applicable) now that users understand the concept, why not inform them of other biased expressions that refer to said concept, in order to help prevent them from using them?
- 6) ***Also called:*** (if applicable) now that users understand the concept, why not inform them of other expressions that refer to the same concept, for immediate recognition and possible use?
- 7) ***Additional senses:*** (if applicable) when there are multiple senses for the same expression, these too should be covered.

As seen here, an optimal *article structure* helps to better provide the *content*. When the *content* is optimally provided, the *functions* are better addressed. When the *functions* are being properly taken care, then so are the *users*.



### 5.5.3: *Content: quality and quantity.*

The last question to be addressed in this section is: how much coverage?

During the preparation of dictionaries, lexicographers have been faced with the dilemma of how to properly balance the comprehensiveness of the lexicon, along with providing the completeness of treatment that would be desirable for each lemma. Where an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is concerned, *both* a comprehensive central list *and* a detailed treatment of each listed lemma are equally important. Since both require pretty much equal weighting, why not maximise both? That is, to provide the key benefits of *both* comprehensiveness as a lexicon *and* as full a treatment as needed for each article. As mentioned in the *typology* section of this chapter, this would be a *restricted* dictionary, so only a part of the lexicon of the English language would be covered, leaving that much more space for the included lemmas.

This approach has one big advantage and one big “disadvantage.” The big benefit is that users will be that much more likely to find the lemmas they want, *and* will get the information they need. The big “drawback” is that this method will involve that much more work for the lexicographers. But, without users there would be no lexicons, and without lexicons there would be no lexicographers. This kind of work should be done with gusto, so hopefully that extra effort will be gladly expended for those grateful users. So, the answer to the “how much coverage?” question is: whatever it takes.

### 5.6: *Electronic resources, and inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries.*

As a vital part of the evolution of the field of lexicography, [Gouws \(2018a\)](#) argues in favour of a single lexicographical theory which provides for the best possible user experience with dictionaries in both printed<sup>266</sup> and online media. He states that this is best accomplished by focusing

*“on the improvement of access procedures in dictionaries by means of enhanced access structures and unambiguous access route.”* ([Gouws, 2018:54](#))

He also emphasises that dictionary structures as a whole need to be considered in order to provide users with an optimal lexicographical experience.

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<sup>266</sup> Please note that although this dictionary might also be offered in a printed format, that such a lexicon is meant primarily to be in electronic form, in order to enable all the benefits mentioned in this Chapter.



The suggestions presented in this section are based on user-experience enhancements that are only possible when presenting lexicographical information through an electronic medium. Many of these ideas could also be incorporated into other LGP and LSP lexicons, but, here they are tailored to the enrichment of the utility of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, specifically.

### 5.6.1: *Mediostructure.*

Everything has always been connected. Thanks to electronic media, most of it is conveniently available. And, in the case of lexicons, all of it should be instantaneously accessible as well.

As has been underscored, one of the objectives of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is to provide users with what they need the first time they search. There should not be the need to turn a single additional page, or to even click or tap again, unless desired. As mentioned, this is accomplished mainly through the single A to Z alphabetical macrostructural ordering. Another key component of this is to **not** have any *cross-references*. That said, in a lexicon in electronic form, everything can be cross-referenced.

Electronic media takes the *mediostructure* of any quality lexicon to the next level, since now a single click can transfer users to the next place they wish to go. *Cross-referencing* is seamless and all-encompassing when there is the ability to click or tap on any *hyperlinked* expression to access its full article. In an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, all lemmas included in the central list would be hyperlinked.

### 5.6.2: *Mouse functionality.*

*Hovering* with the mouse pointer over expressions included in the central list should also enable several features, including providing the paraphrase of meaning of the *hyperlinked* expression, or the first couple dozen words of it if over a given length. (*Clicking* on the *hyperlinked* expression would access the full article).

Here are some enhancements that could be incorporated into a word-processing or similar program:

~~Strikethrough and red~~ text alerts to possibly biased or exclusive expressions. A user might hover over said text to see inclusive alternatives, or click on the text for an explanation of where the possible bias or exclusion is. By right-clicking, users could then select a menu item to choose to ignore this instance of bias if desired, or all such occurrences. This is similar to how a word processor currently might give the option to ignore specific spelling mistakes, or to disregard “grammar rules that are broken.” Along a similar vein, the right-click menu may also be used to enable auto-correcting with inclusive alternatives.

For example, in this text:

... the ~~settlers~~ displaced the native inhabitants, and soon discovered that there was oil in the ...

A right-click on the red strikethrough text, followed by a text replacement with the desired provided option might yield:

... the invaders displaced the native inhabitants, and soon discovered that there was oil in the ...

Please hover with mouse over ~~settlers~~ to see *colonisers, colonizers, colonists, invaders, occupiers*<sup>267</sup>. Needless to say, at this time the selection and replacement functionalities here described are still not available. Later, additional mouse functions that are programmable depending on user needs, such as translations<sup>268</sup> of inclusive expressions, could be provided.

### 5.6.3: Access structure, search functionality, and customisation.

On a web page and/or an app, there are many ways to provide users a streamlined lexicographical experience, along with many benefits. Here are some possibilities:

The most important part is the **search box**, which is a part of the *access structure* of online dictionaries. Here are some suggested salient features for it:

- It should be near or at the top of the page, and be relatively large.
- It should contain a text inside, stating something like: “please start typing the desired expression here.” *Said text may be slightly lighter in colour, and in italics, to hint that it may be typed over.*

<sup>267</sup> Please note that unfortunately this hovering feature will not be seen in the PDF version of this file, but the message is the same.

<sup>268</sup> Word processors may already offer “right-click translation” options.

- It should have an *autocomplete* function, for suggested lemmas. That is, if looking up *spinster*, for instance, after having typed up to *spin*, to be able to see autocomplete choices that may be clicked or tapped on, including *spin*, *spin control*, *spin doctor*, *spinmeister*, *spinster*, *spinsterhood*, and *spinsterish*.
- It should have a default search function for lemmas, but also have a *drop-down menu* right next to the search box (as opposed to the top or side of the page), for other options, including:
  - searching by lemma
  - searching by biased/unbiased alternatives
  - searching by text within the paraphrases of meaning
  - searching by text anywhere in the article (which includes examples and illustrations)
  - searching by the identified search zones
  - searching by keywords (all of the above, plus the outer texts)
- Other options, after the appropriate derivative works have been written, might include:
  - thesaurus functions
  - “foreign” language (other than English) equivalents.
- And, the ability to search one or more regular (general) English dictionaries should also be available.

On the *results* page, in addition to the full article, there should be a selection of further resources, including:

- Related concepts: for example, in the result for *othering*, there might be additional related expressions users may wish to explore, such as *out-group*, *in-group*, and *exclusion*.
- For topics getting extra deep treatment, such as *patriarchy*, *racism*, the *gender binary*, *othering*, and *speciesism*, a text alerting to such essays.
- Nearby lemmas, including, for instance, the five before and the five after, in a hyperlinked *vertical* list, with the “current lemma” in the middle.

[Bergenholtz, Bothma, and Gouws \(2011\)](#) call for users to be able to set up a *personal user profile* that would remember preferences throughout subsequent sessions, and which could be changed at any time. They also described how searches and results could be personalised,

and suggested the provision of additional fields that would provide users varying levels of detail, depending on their needs. [Prinsloo \(2005:13\)](#) refers to *smart searches*, which “*can be performed from the menu bar, and represent excellent examples of what is referred as ‘new routes to the data’ and ‘bringing together of related items’.*”

These would naturally also apply to an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary. Here are some more ideas related to the *customisation* of the user experience, with each also based on the creation of *individual user profiles*:

- Determining the *default search* (might be, for instance, by *keyword* instead of *lemma*), plus a drop-down menu by the *search box* allowing for one-click selection of any desired search, such as by *inclusive alternatives*.
- The ability to set up *custom searches*, with the option to obtain results by selecting one or more of the identified *search zones*.
- Having a place for their own notes and comments on any given expressions, which would be saved for future reference, updating, sending, etc.
- To be able to save vocabulary for future use, including seamless flashcard functionality.

#### 5.6.4: Other resources and benefits.

- Learning resources, including:
  - The ability to star, flag, or otherwise save a list of expressions for one-click access, to be revisited when desired, for vocabulary enhancement, or for any other desired use.
  - Examples of the use of the expressions in the scholarly literature, mass media, social media, and/or basically anything on the web.
  - Texts and videos with examples where bias are present. For example, a video of a political speech, with regular subtitles on the bottom, along with captions on the top of the screen that feature commentary on the incorporated bias and exclusion.
  - Texts (in quiz form, if desired) where users find the bias and exclusion present. The answers would explain why given expressions are biased and/or exclusive.
  - Texts (in quiz form, if desired) where users identify inclusive expressions. The answers would explain why given expressions are unbiased and inclusive.

And:

- On the drop-down *page menu* (on a side or on the top of the page, as opposed to the *search box menu*): One-click access to a *textbox* where users may freely enter text, to see where it is flagged for bias and exclusion. This would be a further enhancement to the *communicative* functions of such a lexicon.
- Besides all this, all apps, programs, devices, and so on (including when logged in at school, work, a library, etc.), need to be *synchronised in real time*. This includes everything from the last lemma looked up, through the customisable data such as vocabulary saved for later.
- Other benefits of electronic versions include the ability to *update* any provided content whenever desired.

#### 5.6.5: It's not all good news.

Users should be able to get all they want, the way they want it, and when they want it. This should all be easy and enjoyable, but may not necessarily be so. [Gouws and Tarp \(2016\)](#) warn against *lexicographic data overload*, so lexicographers must be on the lookout to not present information in a manner that overwhelms the user, be it by the presence of superfluous content, difficulty in finding what is desired, or even being given the wrong data. They also mention *non-lexicographic data overload*, mainly in the form of prominent and often bothersome marketing, which can considerably diminish the lexicographical experience. [Fuertes-Olivera and Tarp \(2014:197\)](#) also comment on unwanted “extra elements” on the screen, such as advertisements, since they would not be a part of a “familiar and reassuring visual environment.”

#### 5.7: Derivative works.

As explained in detail in Chapter Four, inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries will be written to meet the previously unfulfilled needs of several user groups. If a lexicographical work is therefore so innovative and useful, then other works may logically follow, as a part of the *dictionary culture* that not only has users using lexicons, but that is also providing the lexicons they need.

In the case of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries, derivative works might include *bilingual versions*. For instance, a dictionary which:

- Has the biased lemmas in English in **Arial bold**, followed by the equivalent in the target language in (***Arial bold and italic***), between parentheses.
- Then, the unbiased alternative(s) in English, in TimesNewRoman, followed by the equivalent in the target language in (*italicised TimesNewRoman*), between parentheses.
- After that comes the explanation in English of the bias, in TimesNewRoman, followed by the translation into the target language in *italicised TimesNewRoman*.

For example, here is how this would work in Spanish:

**stone deaf (*sordo como una tapia*)** – unable to hear (*incapaz de oír*). An unnecessary and dismissive metaphor, whose use should be avoided. *Una metáfora innecesaria y desdeñosa, cuyo uso se debería evitar.*

Another useful reference work based on an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would be a *bias-free and inclusive expression thesaurus*. For example:

**adman** *n* – *advertising executive, advertising agent, advertising seller, advertising representative, advertising account executive, advertising account manager, ad executive, ad agent, ad seller, ad representative, ad rep, advertising rep, copywriter.*

**bug splat** *n* – *drone strike victims, drone attack victims, victims of drone strikes, victims of drone attacks, victims of drone warfare.*

**chair** *n* – **instead of** *chairman, chairwoman, chairperson, chairlady, Madam chairman, Madam chairwoman, Madam chairperson, Madam chair, lady chair, lady chairman.*

**gender-confirming surgery** *n* – **instead of** *sex change surgery, sex reassignment surgery, gender reassignment surgery, sex change operation, sex reassignment operation, gender reassignment operation.*

**old wives' tale** *n* – *folklore, superstition, nonsense, tall tale, myth, foolish story, stuff and nonsense, hooey, balderdash, bunk.*

**single woman** *n* – **instead of** *spinster, confirmed spinster, old maid, unmarried woman, bachelorette, cat lady, crazy cat lady.*

**spokesman** *n* – *representative, agent, speaker, voice, advocate, proponent, flack, official, mouthpiece, mouth, ambassador, press agent, publicist, shill.*

The *article structure* here is so straightforward, that no further description is needed. The *access structure* would still be a single A to Z listing of all the lemmas. In electronic versions, a click on an expression would provide direct access to an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, for any desired paraphrases of meaning and more, and vice versa.

There could also be versions for elementary or primary school pupils, or specific realms of expertise, such as law or medicine, among other target groups. As the awareness of the importance of *real* inclusion increases, there could be inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries for even more specialised user groups, such as *native speakers of Spanish learning English as an additional language*, etc.

## 5.8: A summary of the *contemplative* and *transformative* characteristics of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

Within the context of lexicographical theories, [Tarp \(2008:10\)](#) states the following:

“The third distinction is between *contemplative theories* and *transformative theories*, in other words theories whose relationship to practice is characterised by being observing and transforming respectively.”

*A Theoretical Model for the Preparation of an Inclusive and Bias-Free Expression Dictionary* would be for a lexicographical work that is much more *transformative* than *contemplative*, as per the typology described by [Tarp \(2008\)](#). This emphasis on the *transformative* component is aligned with what [Gouws \(2011\)](#) suggests for new and innovative works. Salient *transformative* aspects include its being a new type of dictionary, complete with an entirely novel approach to the preparation and presentation of lexicographical information, and a unique article structure.

Here is a summary of several of the *contemplative* and *transformative* characteristics of a lexicon that would be written based on the theoretical model that this dissertation provides:

### 5.8.1: On the *contemplative* side.

- The lexicon being a monolingual English dictionary.
- It is a language for general purposes lexicon.
- Paraphrases of meaning are provided.

- The A to Z access structure for the central list of all listed lemmas.
- The typefaces utilised.
- The enumeration of multiple senses with numbers.
- Other equivalent expressions for the lemma are provided.

### 5.8.2: *Transformative aspects.*

- The providing of non-biased and inclusive alternatives to biased and/or exclusive expressions.
- Although the provision of paraphrases of meaning is *contemplative*, in this dictionary it is also a *transformative* aspect, since:
  - They are free of bias.
  - They also identify where the bias and exclusion are.
- Illustrations and/or further commentary on the bias and exclusion.
- For biased expressions: the provision of other deprecated expressions.
- For unbiased expressions: the provision of other inclusive expressions.
- Unbiased expressions will have explanations and illustrations as to why they are inclusive.
- Unbiased expressions will have explanations and illustrations also that accentuate the relevance of the expression to the world of bias and exclusion.
- Bias-free and inclusive expressions are included in the central list (not just the biased and/or exclusive ones).
- Multiword lexical items get same treatment as single word lexical items.

### 5.8.3: *Some contemplative/transformative aspects, specific to electronic versions.*

#### 5.8.3.1: *Contemplative.*

- The ability to enter text to search by lemma.
- The presentation of lexicographical content in a digital form, which includes being able to perform tasks such as:
  - left clicking (hyperlinks)



- tapping (hyperlinks)
- right clicking (menu items, etc.)
- The convenience of seeing nearby lemmas, which can be accessed by clicking or tapping.
- Being able to obtain in-depth treatment of specific articles, access to additional resources, and so on, with a single click.

### 5.8.3.2: *Contemplative/transformative.*

- ~~Strikethrough and red text~~ is both *contemplative* and *transformative*: it is *contemplative*, since some programs may already alert to possible spelling or grammar errors with underlining. It is *transformative*, since ~~strikethrough and red text~~ for possible bias or exclusion is innovative. Any alerting to bias or exclusion would be completely novel.
- Hovering with the mouse to get content such as a paraphrase of meaning is already seen in many programs, such as word processors and web browsers, and is therefore *contemplative*. Hovering over text to see a bias-free and inclusive paraphrase of meaning is *transformative*.
- Search boxes with menus are *contemplative*. To be able to search by biased/unbiased alternatives, text within the paraphrases of meaning, text anywhere in the article, by search zone, and by keyword (anywhere in the lexicon, including outer texts) is *transformative*.
- Including synonyms, and related concepts, is *contemplative*. Providing alternative inclusive and bias-free expressions would be *transformative*.
- Providing learning resources, such as quizzes and in-depth essays is *contemplative*. The inclusive/exclusive focus is *transformative*.
- Offering samples of usage from corpora and the mass media is *contemplative*. Examples of the use of the expressions in the scholarly literature, mass media, social media, and/or basically anything on the web is *transformative* (but soon to be *contemplative*).

### 5.8.3.3: *Transformative.*

- As mentioned earlier in this chapter, although several key metalexigraphers have advocated for the creation of individual user profiles to truly customise the user experience, this still has not occurred.

- Real-time synching across “everything,” as described earlier. If it can be done for email, it can be done for lexicographical content.
- Right-click features, such as the displaying of inclusive alternatives, offering to replace biased expressions with inclusive ones, and so on.
- Learning resources:
  - Videos with regular subtitles on the bottom, along with captions on the top of the screen that feature commentary on the incorporated bias and exclusion.
  - Texts with biased content identified, to “sharpen the eye” where bias and exclusion are concerned.
  - Text boxes for the flagging of biased and/or exclusive expressions in entered texts.

## 5.9: Conclusions:

This chapter began with a description of the *typology* of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary, where it was concluded that the theoretical model for the preparation of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary offered in this dissertation would be for a *monolingual synchronic English restricted LGP dictionary that is openly, totally, and strongly proscriptive*.

Next, the *structures* were covered, proceeding from the general to the specific, namely:

- the frame structure (megastructure)
- the outside structures (outer texts, outer matter, or outside matter)
- the outer access structure and macrostructure
- the mediostructure (mesostructure)
- the inner access structure, article structure, and microstructure
- the search zones, of which there would be a maximum of seven:
  - depending on the lemma, “inclusive alternatives to this biased expression,” or “instead of these deprecated expressions”
  - paraphrase of meaning
  - depending on the lemma, “insight into the bias,” or “insight into the inclusiveness”
  - towards a heightened inclusive awareness

(and the following, if applicable):

- other deprecated expressions to avoid
- also called
- additional senses

There would be three search zones in most articles, a fourth in many, and the rest would appear only as needed. A detailed example of the search zones “in action” was given for each lemma type, specifically:

- an expression that is biased and exclusive
- a concept related to bias and exclusion
- an expression that is bias-free and inclusive

It was concluded that a properly organised *article structure* fits all user needs, no matter what the reason is for looking up the very same lemma, which can vary according to the specific information needs a user may have at any given moment.

The *functions* of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary were summarised in Chapter Four: dictionaries should properly address the specific information needs of specific users under specific extra-lexicographical circumstances, and be quick and easy to use. The particulars on how to accomplish this were also thoroughly explained in Chapter Four, with final thoughts on this here in Chapter Five.

Then, *content* was considered from three perspectives, these being:

- How lexicographers as real people affect the selection of lemmas and their treatment.  
The vital role that an awareness of how power, privilege, subjugation, and exclusion work, in order to help fight othering and oppression on the individual, institutional, and cultural levels, was again emphasised.
- How its usefulness is enhanced by a suitable article structure.
- How to optimise both quality and quantity.

Then, since dictionary users should be able to get what they want, the way they want it, and when they want it, many of the particularly beneficial ways in which the presentation of content via *electronic mediums* were enumerated, including:

- All content (the central list and outer texts) is immediately available, enabling:
  - searching by *lemma*
  - searching by *biased/unbiased alternatives*
  - searching by *text within the paraphrases of meaning*
  - searching by *text anywhere in the article* (which includes examples and illustrations)
  - searching by any combination of the identified *search zones*
  - searching by *keywords* (all of the above, plus outer texts)
- Everything is *cross-referenced*, despite there not being a single cross-reference.
- The ability to create *individual user profiles*, which provide *customised* content, including specifically tailored searches, a place to make notes, to save vocabulary, and so on.
- Mouse hovering for paraphrases of meaning.
- ~~Strikethrough and red text~~ alerting to possibly biased or exclusive expressions. A user might hover over said text to see and select inclusive alternatives, or click on the text for an explanation of where the bias or exclusion is.
- Results pages with:
  - Related exclusion/inclusion concepts.
  - Learning resources focused on identifying exclusion, and fostering inclusion.
- Real-time synchronisation between programs, apps, devices, and so on.
- Updates that can be prepared and provided at any time.

Then, *derivative works* were briefly explored, with examples, for thesauri and bilingual versions.

Finally, a summary of the *contemplative and transformative characteristics* of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries was given, including a listing specific to *electronic lexicons*.

## Chapter Six – Dissertation Conclusions:

All people and Peoples ought to be able to live with a sense of agency, worth, and dignity in their lives. All social settings should be safe and welcoming, be they at home, school, work, medical care facilities, anywhere within the criminal justice system, going from place to place; wherever. Since language, culture, and society are inextricably intertwined, if a language is not inclusive, then how could the society that uses it be?

The English language has widespread biased and exclusive expression, which may lead to individuals and groups of people being abused, bullied, dehumanised, oppressed, stereotyped, and othered. This unjust treatment might be based on gender, race, ethnic group, place of origin, sexual orientation, belief system, age, physical specific needs, and/or economic condition, among many others.

In this dissertation, three relevant, timely, and impactful lexicographical questions have been addressed, namely:

- Are general English language dictionaries biased?
- If so, how?
- What kind of dictionary can be written to improve upon this situation?

In response to question 1:

In Chapters Two and Three it was shown that there is widespread biased and exclusive expression in the English language. Chapter Two provided insight into how oppressing and othering expressions come about in the first place, along with providing some real-life consequences of biased and exclusive expression. In Chapter Three it was evidenced that general language dictionaries are not doing an adequate job of alerting users to this usage. These lexicons are generally ignoring or mischaracterising such usage, which essentially legitimises biased expression. Consequently, the regular dictionaries do not give their users insight into how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language. So, the answer to this question is yes, general English language dictionaries are biased.

In response to question 2:

Using a sociolinguistic and sociocultural framework based on the insight that analytical methods including critical discourse analysis, critical reality awareness, and

intersectionality provide, there was an exacting examination of how twelve habitually utilised general English language dictionaries perform from the bias and exclusion perspectives. Through the thorough scrutiny of their treatment of eight example expressions, it was evidenced that these lexicons do not do an adequate job of alerting users to this usage. Quite the contrary. Anyone accessing these dictionaries is usually only getting a part of the full picture, information that ignores these aspects, or even paraphrases of meaning which promote further biased and exclusive usage. So, the answer to the question as to *how* these dictionaries are biased is: they serve to foster, preserve, and further the established order, by keeping users mostly in the dark.

In response to question 3:

In Chapter Three, the treatment that the regular dictionaries gave the example expressions, if they had them among their listed lemmas, was contrasted with how an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would handle them. The paraphrases of meaning offered by the latter, combined with the added insight that the examples and illustrations provide, help users to obtain a much more comprehensive picture of the real-life use and attendant consequences of so many words and expressions. Unlike the general lexicons, an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary would help identify, describe, and demonstrate how inequality, othering, and victimisation work through language. In Chapter Four, the users who will benefit from this dictionary were identified, along with how to best fit their needs. And, in Chapter Five there is a thorough description of the typology, structures, functions, and content of such a dictionary, along with a closer look at lexicographers as real people and how they influence content. This is then followed by a commentary on the benefits of electronic resources, possible derivative works, and more. All of the aforementioned answer the question of what kind of dictionary can be written to improve upon this situation: an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary.

Biased dictionary coverage was perhaps “understandable” by most in the past, and still by many in the present, but, it must be done away with if lexicographers are to do their part in our society becoming more egalitarian. The goal of an inclusive and bias-free expression dictionary is to help effect real-world changes by enhancing the awareness of how power, privilege, oppression, and othering work, on an individual, institutional, and cultural level.

For this, bias and exclusion must be identified (lemmas appear), described (unbiased paraphrases of meaning provided), and illustrated (real-life examples and consequences provided). Plus, bias-free and inclusive alternatives must be given, where applicable.

A problem in the current lexicographic practice is a lack of inclusive and bias-free expression dictionaries. To date, metalexicography has not assisted practical lexicographers in a sufficient way to plan and compile such lexicons. Factors including the interplay of exclusionary connotations of expressions, and the nuances and gradations of biased expression are beyond the scope of even unabridged dictionaries. This dissertation has provided a theoretical model for the preparation of a dictionary focused on biased and exclusive expression, so that users will have a lexicographical reference which can be trusted in these crucial aspects of language and communication.

Future research might delve even deeper into specific areas of othering and oppression, as legitimised by general English dictionaries. These may include sexism, racism, colonialism, chauvinism, xenophobia, heteronormativity, classicism, ageism, ableism, and ethnocentrism, among many others.

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